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ART. I. PROSPECTS OF CENTRAL AND WESTERN AFRICA.

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1. *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa : performed in the years 1795, 1796 and 1797. With an Account of a subsequent Mission to that Country in 1805. By Mungo Park, Surgeon. To which is added an Account of the Life of Mr. Park. With an Appendix containing Geographical Illustrations of Africa by Maj. Rennell.* 2 vols., 4to, maps and plates, London, 1816.
2. *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa, in the years 1822, 1823, and 1824. By Major Denham, F. R. S., Captain Clapperton, and the late Doctor Oudney.* 2 vols. 8vo., 3d ed. London : John Murray, 1828.
3. *Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo ; and across the great Desert to Morocco, in the years 1824—1828. By Rene Caillie.* 2 vols. 8vo., London : Colburn and Bentley, 1830.
4. *History of the British Colonies. By R. Montgomery Martin, F. S. S., Member of the ' Asiatic ' and of the ' Medical and Physical ' Societies of Bengal, &c. &c.* 5 vols. 8vo. London : James Cochrane and Co. 1835. Volume Ath, Possessions in Africa and Austral-Asia.

IN examining the causes of national peculiarities and in predicting national destinies we must undoubtedly regard climate, location and physical resources as very efficient, ever-active agents ; bearing indeed the same relation to semi-barbarous states which philosophical and religious systems and political doctrines do to the more advanced and perfected forms of social life. The inhabitants of a level, widely extended and fertile country, where the skies for ever smile, and the earth, without the solicitations of industry, pours

forth her richest products of fruit and flower, of utility and beauty ; where there are few natural facilities of communication with other countries, or if possessed are closed up by oppressive power ; where every thing lulls to repose and nothing incites to enterprise ;—the inhabitants of such a country cannot be expected to exhibit the same developement as those of a different region, where the surface is uneven, where the soil demands labour and the climate demands foresight and prudence and skill in the mechanic arts, and the facilities of intercourse invite to an exchange of products with other nations. These physical differences will produce corresponding differences of intellectual and moral character. In the former case, as in Eastern nations, the mind, if educated, will be characterized by religious and poetic contemplation, by a glowing imagination, and an absence of enterprise ; while in the latter it will be bold, enterprising, inquisitive and scientific. In both cases, man will be like the produce of the soil on which he lives ; in the one case like the flowers of beauty and fruits of luxury basking in a cloudless sun ; in the other like the “unwedgeable and gnarled oak,” conversing with storms and battling with tempests above, and searching deep into nature’s mysteries beneath. If uncivilized, the former will never emerge from barbarism without some foreign influence ; while the inherent tendency of the latter will be to civilization.

These principles give us an explanation to some extent of the hitherto singular destiny of the African continent, which has played so strange and mysterious a part,—or rather, which has so strangely and mysteriously played no part,—in the history of man. With unparalleled resources and with infinite varieties of physical and national character, she has still, with the exception of two or three small territories, been a total blank upon the map of human developement. Ethiopia, Egypt and Carthage alone have thrown themselves upon the theatre of humanity, while every other region has reposed in profound obscurity.

Thus Africa has hung like a dark cloud upon the horizon of history, of which the borders only have been illuminated, and flung their splendors upon the world. And this is just what her physical peculiarities, in conjunction with some other influences, rendered necessary. Her northern and eastern borders along the Mediterranean and Red Seas, and up the valley of the Nile, were possessed, by climate, soil

and relation to other states, of every facility and incentive to the attainment of great power; so that without a knowledge of the fact, it might have been affirmed *a priori* that in these regions there would be seats of commerce, learning, and civilization.

Where now shall we look for the cause of the degradation of Western and Central Africa? In the theory that the mind of the Negro is incapable of advancement? or is it to be sought in the *circumstances* in which he has been placed?

Egypt and Ethiopia have sculptured the true explanation upon the enduring rocks of their monuments and tombs. They corroborate the testimony of ancient history, that from the remotest ages the central nations have been the objects of merciless aggression, at every point where they could hold intercourse with foreign states; that their seacoast in ancient times was unknown to commerce—that civilizer of men; and that on every other side impassable deserts of sand and the interior slave trade united to lock up and carry off the key of every means of national advancement.

The Western coast of Africa was opened to the influence of modern commerce in the 16th century. But his Holiness, the Pope, immediately ordered his Portuguese subjects to christianise the natives by *enslaving* them, or otherwise. They preferred *enslaving* to *otherwise*, and all nations soon emulated their example.

In reviewing this combination of circumstances we cease to wonder at the Negro's history—at his condition in past or present times. And the fact that, amid such influences, he has maintained himself upon his native soil in any instance, above the lowest barbarism is sufficient to vindicate his intellectual capabilities. And if it were not, he is triumphantly vindicated in the works placed at the head of this article. Of these works, that by Mungo Park, considering the time and circumstances under which it appeared, is undoubtedly deserving of the highest celebrity and of all the popularity it has enjoyed. Its author has probably contributed more than any other individual to the advancement of geographical knowledge in respect to Africa. He determined much that was before unknown or merely conjectural in relation to the course, magnitude and peculiarities of that great geographical mystery of mysteries—the Niger. And it is a singular proof of the almost infallible correct-

ness of his judgement that he maintained to the close of his life the theory, that the Niger must take a wide sweep through Central Africa, find a passage through the Kong Mountains, and disembogue itself on the Western coast. As the Congo was the largest river on the coast, and its periodic swells indicated a connection with the rainy season North of the Kong Mountains, he fixed upon that as the source of the Niger. Among the conflicting theories of twenty-five centuries, the essential features of this alone proved correct.* The enterprising Landers first ascertained that the Niger empties itself on this coast, though at a great distance north of the Congo.

The *moral geography* of Africa is equally indebted to Park. He vindicates the Negro character as found in the interior, his social qualities, capacity for moral and intellectual improvement, and his present claims to our friendly and benevolent regard, with an accuracy and justness of observation which command the assent of every mind. His descriptions are clear and lucid, and the whole narration has a natural, easy flow, which bears the reader along with it, and interests him deeply both in the facts presented and in the personal history of the author. His irrepressible ardour so finely tempered with prudence and judgement, his iron will, inflexible to its purpose, but yielding with facile submission to the most trying reverses, his fertility in resources when most would be stupified by despair, and his trust in God when every other trust disappointed him, throw more than the charm of romance around his life and character. In the following scene, he has just been stripped and abandoned by robbers.

"After they were gone, I sat for some time looking around me with amazement and terror. I saw myself in the midst of a vast wilderness in the depth of the rainy season, naked and alone, surrounded by savage animals, and men still more savage. I was five hundred miles from the nearest European settlement. I considered my fate as certain, and that I had no alternative, but to lie down and perish. The influence of religion, however, aided and supported me. I was indeed a stranger in a strange land, yet I was still under the protecting eye of that Providence who has condescended to call himself the stranger's friend. At this moment, painful as were my reflections, the extraordinary beauty of a small moss in fructification irresistibly caught my eye. I mention this to show from what trifling circumstances the mind will sometimes derive consolation;

*Reichard, a German Geographer, ought perhaps to be excepted. He adopted a modification of Park's theory, making the Nun, Old Calabar and Rio del Bey the mouths of the Niger. His theory was found to be correct in its details.

for though the whole plant was not larger than the top of one of my fingers, I could not contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots, leaves, and capsula, without admiration. Can that being, thought I, who planted, watered, and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after his own image?—surely not! Reflections like these would not allow me to despair.”*—Park's Travels, vol. I. p. 237.

One is forcibly reminded by this little incident of those beautiful instructions of our Saviour in Matt. 6: 28—31. Whoever can follow Park through his life to its tragic close, and dwell upon its privations and thrilling incidents without catching something of his spirit, and without feeling an intense interest in Africa, must be singularly destitute of generous sympathies.

Mr. Park's route, in his first tour, was from the mouth of the Gambia Eastward to the Niger, which he reached at 1° 35' West long. 14° 10' N. lat. He travelled about seventy miles down the Niger, and returned up the Niger and through more southern regions to the Gambia. His second tour in 1805 retraced very nearly the track of his homeward route in 1797, but proceeded much farther down the Niger to nearly 4° East long. where he was probably murdered by the natives.

Denham and Clapperton's route was from the Mediterranean Southward to Bornou, along the meridian of 15° East long., around Lake Tchad to Tangalia in long. 17° East, and from thence Westward to Lackatoo in long. 5° 30', being in all 11° 30', or nearly 700 geographical miles of longitude. The Western boundary, therefore, of their discoveries is 400 miles farther into the central regions, and the Eastern boundary 1100 miles farther than the termination of Park's first route. Their journals are full of the liveliest interest and of very valuable information upon the moral and intellectual as well as the physical condition of Central Africa. Their independent spirit in avowing themselves to be Englishmen and Christians wherever they went, so opposite to the evasive and deceptive course of many African travellers, is worthy of admiration; and it finally proved to be the best and safest policy.†

* See also Maj. Laing's Account of Soolimana, &c., and Denham and Clapperton's supplement to Bornou.

† Our determination to travel fearlessly and boldly in our own characters, as Englishmen and Christians, mistrusting no one, so far from prov-

Monsieur Caillié, our next traveller, is an enterprising, enthusiastic Frenchman, who in very early life formed a determination to visit the city of Timbuctoo on the Niger. He accomplished his object, and received the premium offered by the Geographical Society of Paris to the first traveller who should reach Timbuctoo, and furnish a description of that mysterious and far famed city. He was also rewarded with many distinguished marks of royal favour and patronage, and was created Knight of the Legion of Honor. His observations, however, are not so rich in valuable information as those of the travellers before mentioned. He seems to have sacrificed to the attainment of his favourite object every principle and feeling which he was bound sacredly to cherish. He abjured his religion and country, professed the Mohammedan faith, and paid homage to the Koran and the Prophet in order to facilitate his progress among the Mohammedans. It places him in no enviable contrast with the English travellers just referred to. The credibility of his whole Narrative has been questioned, but successfully vindicated by M. Jomard, one of the Vice Presidents of the Paris Geographical Society.

That portion of Mr. Martin's History of the British Colonies which is devoted to Western Africa is chiefly valuable for its accurate and condensed statements relating to the history and resources of commerce on the coast.

Instead of examining here either of the above works, in detail, we shall present some general views upon the *prospects* of Western and Central Africa, derived from an examination and comparison of them all. These prospects rest mainly upon two bases—the physical resources of the country, and the character and number of its inhabitants.

Its physical resources have been gradually developing for the last twenty years, but with a rapidity entirely unanticipated. There is probably no other equal expanse of territory which has such a portion of its surface capable of easy cultivation. From the base of the Kong Mountains, in every direction, to the Atlantic on one side and to the deserts on the other, the land slopes off in easy gradations or terraces, presenting luxuriant plains, immense forests, and

ing an impediment to our progress, as we were assured from all quarters it would do, excited a degree of confidence to which we may, in a great measure, attribute the success which has attended our steps. Denham, Clapperton and Oudney, vol. 2. p. 186.

mountainous or undulating regions of great variety and beauty. It possesses, almost universally, a soil which knows no exhaustion. A perpetual bloom covers the surface over which reigns the untroubled serenity of a cloudless sky. Aside from the splendours and luxuries of the vegetable world the great staples of commerce may be produced here in unlimited abundance. The cotton tree, which in our Southern States must be planted every spring, grows there for four successive years, yielding four crops of the finest quality. Coffee grows spontaneously in the interior, giving about nine pounds to the plant. Rice with a little cultivation in some places equals the fertility of the imperial fields of China; and the sugar cane grows with unrivalled magnificence. Those travellers who have most carefully examined the soil and products assure us, that there is nothing in the glowing climes of the Indies, Eastern or Western, which some parts of Central Africa will not produce with equal richness. "*It cannot admit of a doubt,*" says Park, "that all the rich and valuable productions, both of the East and West Indies, might easily be naturalized, and brought to the utmost perfection, in the tropical parts of this immense continent. Nothing is wanting to this end; but example, to enlighten the minds of the natives, and instruction, to enable them to direct their industry to proper objects. It was not possible for me to behold the *wonderful fertility of the soil, the vast herds of cattle*, proper both for labour and food, and a variety of other circumstances favourable to colonization and agriculture, and reflect withal on the means which presented themselves of a vast inland navigation, without lamenting that a country so abundantly gifted and favoured by nature should remain in its present savage and neglected state." Park, vol. I. p. 303.

The mineral riches of Africa will perhaps equal those of her soil. In the times of Herodotus gold dust was an article of commerce with the caravan merchants who visited the Negro countries. He describes quite minutely the manner in which the natives obtained it; and the process is nearly the same as that practised by them at the present day. The source of most of this gold is in the Kong chain of mountains, from whence it is washed down from its native beds by the mountain streams, which for so many centuries have been levying tribute upon these exhaustless stores without sensible diminution. But their

purest and richest metallic veins lie much deeper than those which are worn away by the attrition of mountain streams. When, therefore, these mountains shall be explored, and their mines worked by the aid of modern skill and science, another source of unlimited wealth will be opened in the heart of Africa. Rich and extensive beds of iron ore have also been discovered in the interior, and some of the natives have acquired the art of working it.

The present commerce of Western Africa, although in its incipient state and hardly known to the world, will sustain these views of her soil and productions. The following kinds of timber, which have been proved to be valuable for naval architecture and cabinet work, have already become regular articles of export to England. We can give only the native names to most of them.

"1. Co-Tartosa, or African oak; 2. Tolongah, or brimstone; 3. Bumia; 4. Cooper; 5. Con; 6. Conta; 7. Roth; 8. Wossomah; 9. Jumo; 10. Buckam; 11. Topercanico; 12. Mool, (this tree produces vegetable butter;) 13. Sop; 14. Kelill; 15. Cong; 16. African almond; 17. Bombay; 18. Dye-wood; 19. Pissaman, (no marine animal attacks it); 20. Black oak; 21. Wismore; 22. African cedar; 23. White wismore; 24. Cronko; 25. Shin-shinginara; 26. Blue wismore; 27. Arwoora; 28. African mammeé apple; 29. Catepy; 30. Lowland box-wood; 31. Sing-singa; 32. African pine; 33. Highland box-wood; 34. Singuoor; 35. Caboco; 36. Bessey; 37. African mulberry; 38. Mangrove. The grain of several of these woods is very rich, and the furniture made therefrom not only durable, but extremely beautiful. In Mr. Foster's elegant mansion at Hempstead, there are several articles of furniture made of African mahogany, which would vie with the wood of any country in the world; and for ship building, the African teak is now generally and deservedly esteemed." Martin, vol. 4th, 583.

Many false and even absurd statements have been current in reference to the commerce of this part of the world. An authority no less respectable than M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, has given a random estimate of the Western African trade at from £40,000 to £60,000, or from \$200,000 to \$300,000 per annum. And by those unfriendly to Colonization, the whole commercial intercourse has been ridiculed as worthless and contemptible. We shall present a few facts on this point, collected by Mr. Martin from the Custom Houses of England and the colonies, to which we would invite particular attention. The following is a summary of the imports from the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Cape Coast, by one mercantile house for the years 1832-33

-34.

Gold, 27,364 oz. = £109,456. Gum Senegal, 679 tons = £57,715. Wax, 3,676 cwt. = £27,570. Gambia wood, 892 loads = £8,920. Palm oil, 876 tons = £26,280. Rice, 2,498 cwt. = £2,500. Elephant's teeth, 69,693 lbs. = £13,928. Dollars, 10,578 = £2,292. Doubloons, 998 = £3,742. Guinea grains, 1638 lbs. = £82. Camwood, 300 tons, = £6,000. Teak timber, 85 loads = £850. Total value of imports £276,773, or nearly \$1,400,000. Thus the trade of a *single house* would be £92,257, *per annum*, or *nearly double* the amount attributed by M'Culloch to all Western Africa. The total of English commerce with the West coast in 1829 was equal to £258,573, according to Custom House returns. But in 1834, the importations of *palm oil* alone were 12,650 tons, valued at £28 per ton, which would equal £354,300, or more than \$1,700,000. The trade in a single article is therefore seven times greater than M'Culloch's whole estimate, and exhibits an astonishing and very encouraging increase during the last few years. Many other facts of a similar nature may be found in Martin, vol. 4. pp. 603—616.

But whether these *natural* will become *real* and *permanent* advantages must depend upon the facilities which nature has furnished for internal communication. The impression that these are limited is a very erroneous one. Western Africa has a coast lying open to commerce from the 18th degree of north latitude to the 16th of south, giving by its winding course an outline distance of three or four thousand miles. Numerous large and navigable rivers flow from the Kong mountains down the Atlantic slope into the ocean. Of these the Senegal is about 1,000 miles in length, the Gambia 700, and the Rio Grande, Rio Nunez, Rokelle, Camaranca, Mesurado, Cavally, Rio Volta, &c. are generally from 300 to 400. Next on the north-eastern angle of the Gulf of Guinea are the mouths of the Niger, formerly considered as distinct rivers, under the names of the Nun, Old Calabar, Rio del Bey and Rio del Rey. Eleven degrees further south is the Congo, on the 6° S. L., an immense river which was navigated 400 miles Eastward by Captain Tuckey. Besides the larger rivers, the whole coast is thickly indented with inlets, or arms of the sea, extending into the country and almost invariably receiving at their terminations small rivers, which may be navigated for some distance by flat bottomed steamboats, and which will float down the timber of the forests and afford sites for mills and manufactories. The riches of the whole Atlantic slope can therefore be poured with perfect facility into the lap of commerce.

The interior slope is watered by the Niger and its tributary branches. This river, whose course and termination were the great object of geographical speculation from the

time of Herodotus to the expedition of the Landers, rises in the Kong mountains, near the sources of the Senegal and Gambia, and flows down the interior slope towards the great Desert. After a general direction of five or six hundred miles N. E. it empties into Lake Dibble, on the meridian of Greenwich in N. lat. about 16° . From thence it flows E. a few miles, then winds to the S. E., which direction it pursues to the 9th of N. lat. It then flows due E. 100 miles, turns S. E., next S., and finally S. W., and enters the Gulf of Guinea in a course directly the reverse of its original one. Its whole length cannot be less than from 2,200 to 2,500 miles. It receives a great many large tributary streams, and on the 8° of N. lat. it receives the Shary,* (or Tchadda according to some authorities), a noble river flowing from the eastward and dividing the powerful kingdom of Bornou and Begharmi, to which it opens a steamboat communication from the Gulf of Guinea through the Niger. The navigation of the Niger is clear from obstructions for the distance of four or five hundred miles, above which granitic ridges cross its bed at various points. These obstructions are removed, in a great measure, during the rainy season, when the river is swollen. And if they cannot be removed entirely, the river will still afford means of communication between the points of interruption, and *rail-roads*, the materials for constructing which are abundant, may ultimately unite them all.

One can hardly glance at this noble river and its tributary streams, without feeling that the hand of Omnipotence hollowed out its bed, and guided its course, and filled its channel from the clouds of heaven and the fountains of the earth, that it might gather, for all lands, the gems and gold and wealth of Africa, and give back in return the richer gifts of science, religion, and freedom.

There is another problem to be solved in order to develop the prospects of Western and Central Africa. Are its present inhabitants capable of that moral and intellectual elevation and that enthusiasm of enterprise which will pour the gifts of nature into the commerce of the world? We can give, in this place, only a very imperfect idea of the inhabitants; but a brief sketch of some of the more powerful nations upon the banks of the Niger and Shary and

* Conder's Geographical Dictionary, Lond. 1834, Art. Niger.

along the western coast, will prove the existence of elements out of which religion and civilization may form great and flourishing kingdoms.

The Delta of the Niger is occupied by the kingdom of Benin. Its capital once stood near the bay, and was a mighty and populous city. The withering blasts of the slave trade passed over it, and it perished. Another capital, covering a large area, has been built in the interior, and the king who resides there is said to be a powerful and warlike despot, the ally of the slave traders, and rendered by them the bitter enemy of commerce. His people are brave and ferocious in war, and not destitute of enterprise. Some parts of the country bear marks of high cultivation. Could the slave trade be stopped, and a just commerce established, all the resources of the Niger would flow down to his kingdom, and form one of the greatest commercial emporiums of the world.

As we pass from the Niger up the Shary, there are said to be many populous countries, and vast uninhabited forests. The kingdom of Bornou, which lies on the west side of the river and of Lake Tchad—the great interior sea of Africa—contains a population of about 5,000,000, and furnishes immense herds of cattle, and the finest horses of the central regions. The former capital, old Birnie, contained 200,000 inhabitants, and was surrounded by a massive brick wall, about 40 feet high. The bricks were red and well burned, and the whole structure exhibited a state of the arts not often accredited to Central Africa. It was, however, destroyed by the Foolahs.

"The towns generally are large and well built: they have walls thirty-five and forty feet in height, and nearly twenty feet in thickness. They have four entrances, with three large gates to each, made of solid planks eight or ten inches thick, and fastened together with heavy clamps of iron. The houses consist of several court-yards, between four walls, with apartments leading out of them for slaves; then a passage, and an inner court leading to the habitations of the different wives, who have each a square space to themselves, enclosed by walls, and a handsome thatched hut. From thence also you ascend a wide staircase of five or six steps, leading to the apartments of the owner, which consist of two buildings like towers or turrets, with a terrace of communication between them, looking into the streets, with a castellated window. The walls are made of reddish clay, as smooth as stucco, and the roofs most tastefully arched on the inside with branches, and thatched on the outside with grass. From the horns of the gazelle and the antelope, fixed in the wall, are suspended the quivers, bows, spears and shields of the chief." Denham and Clapperton, vol. 2 172.

European travellers have always been received with marked kindness here, and a strong desire has been manifested for the introduction of European arts and learning, and even for the abolition of the interior slave trade.* The Mohammedan religion has been adopted from the Arabs, and the Arabic language is spoken by the inhabitants. That they are by no means wanting in intelligence and poetic enthusiasm, the following song of their chief, on his return from the Begharmi war, undertaken for the recovery of his favourite wife from captivity, is sufficient evidence. Parts only of the song are given, slightly transposed.

"I return to my people, the people of my heart, and the children of my solicitude, at break of day, coming fasting towards Kouka, with my morning prayer on my lips, in sight of the gate,—the gate that saw me depart! The morning wind blew fresh and cool, yet mild as the evening breeze. The battle of the spears had been long and doubtful, but had ended in glory! had covered my people with honour and victory! Our foes are fallen, and their towns are in ruins! In the open day, by the light of the sun, the children of the prophet trod them under foot! and now we approach our homes. Towards the rising sun we followed them: they fled! they were destroyed! and they were bound! On the fifth day of the week, blessed be the day! the standards of the prophet floated in the wind! The lightnings of my spears played around them! The neighings of my horses seemed like thunder to the unbelievers! They fell! the earth claimed them once more, and drank their blood! From morning until black night we pursued them! Stronger than rocks are my followers—a destroying fire in the eye of their enemies. Spear them! spear them! till the sun sees their bones; and let their bodies be food for birds and hyænas, while they resist the sword of the prophet! But oh! my people, spare the fallen! and those who implore mercy in the name of the One and the Omnipotent! As a thorn pierces through whatever disturbs its retirement, so do my spear-hurling hosts dash their pointed javelins into the flesh of those who break our peace and our repose! When I cheer them on, miserable, miserable are they that oppose them! . . . Oh! glorious expedition! But the greatest joy must be told; the joy, oh, how exquisite!—the recovery of my lost love! a part of myself. Her high and noble forehead like the new moon, and nose like the rainbow! Her arched eyebrows reaching to her temples, overhanging eyes than which the moon is less bright, as it shines through darkness! large piercing eyes, whose looks never could be mistaken! A single glance at these her all conquering beauties instantly called her to my mind, with all the graces of her disposition; lips sweeter than honey and colder than the purest water! Oh, dearest of my wives! Heaven's own gift! what were my sensations when I removed the veil from thy face! Thou knewest me not in thy alarm; animation had left thee! Thou knewest not what was to follow; and thy large eyes had closed in despair. It seemed that lightning had struck me with its fires! As the light of the morning dispels the blackness of night, so did she, reviving, impart to me a gladness overpowering as the blood-red sun, when it breaks forth in its splendour, warming the sons of earth with its reanimating fires. I thought of the day when she was blooming in my presence, when the news of her loss

* Denham and Clapperton, vol. 2, 187 and 193.

came to me like a blast from the desert. My head was laid low with sorrow! The spring returned with its freshness; but its showers could not revive my drooping head! Who shall now tell of my joy? From her shoulders to her waist, how fair is her proportion! When she moves she is like branches waved by a gentle breeze! Silks from India are less soft than her skin; and her form, though noble, is timid as the fawn!" Denham and Clapperton, vol. 2. p. 462.

Begharmi is another powerful kingdom, east of Bornou, more warlike, but less civilized. The characteristics of the nation are best exhibited in the anecdote of one of its chiefs, given a few pages forward.

One of the most populous kingdoms upon the banks of the Niger above its junction with the Shary, is that of the Timbuctoos, who have so much commercial enterprise as to attract a large caravan trade to their capital. M. Caillié arrived at the city of Timbuctoo, April 20th, 1828. He did not find it so large, or so full of business as he anticipated, but he was probably there at the dullest season of the year. He remarks:—

"The people of Timbuctoo, who are in constant communication with the half-civilized inhabitants of the Mediterranean, have some idea of the dignity of human nature. I have constantly observed in my travels, that in proportion as a people was uncivilized, the women were always more enslaved. The female sex in Africa have reason to pray for the progress of cultivation. The women of Timbuctoo are not veiled like those of Morocco: they are allowed to go out when they please, and are at liberty to see any one. The people are gentle and complaisant to strangers. *In trade they are industrious and intelligent*; and the traders are generally wealthy and have many slaves. The men are of the ordinary size, well made, upright, and walk with a firm step. Their colour is a fine deep black. Their noses are a little more aquiline than those of the Mandingoes, and like them they have thin lips and large eyes. I saw some women who might be considered pretty.—The inhabitants of Timbuctoo are exceedingly neat in their dress, and in the interior of their dwellings."—Caillié, vol. 2. p. 61.

They suffer from the hostile incursions of the Moors and Arabs, and the heir to the throne of Timbuctoo was kidnapped fifty or sixty years since, and after a variety of fortunes found himself a slave in one of our southern states. He was a great favourite with his master, and was always distinguished for his noble form and princely bearing. He was patient and obedient, yet dignified and retiring, and never betrayed a trust reposed in him. His favourite amusement was observed to be the tracing of strange figures, in the sand or upon paper, in which he would engage without untiring interest. These proved to be extracts from the

Koran, written in Arabic, in a very graceful, beautiful hand. Although he had been a slave for more than thirty years, during which he had not heard a word of Arabic from any voice, he could still speak and write that language with facility and correctness; and he retained even then a most enthusiastic attachment to his native land, his kingdom and his throne. His freedom was purchased, and he was sent back to Africa. The succession to the throne had passed from him, and he died in his fallen greatness.

The countries of the Niger and Shary will undoubtedly be to Africa what the great western valley is to the United States. They are conjectured to contain at least twenty or twenty-five millions of inhabitants—about double the population of the United States in 1830.

The most numerous and interesting tribe on the western coast is the Ashantees. The king is said to be able, from his own people and his tributaries, to bring 100,000 men into the field. When the English first established themselves at Cape Coast Castle, they were strongly impressed with the dignified and courteous bearing of the king and his court, and with the rude magnificence of his palace. His throne was of massive gold, of native workmanship, and overhung by a golden tree. He was likewise on his part delighted with his English friends, and determined to introduce, as rapidly as possible, English habits and civilization. A war soon after broke out between him and the Fantees; and the English colony at Cape Coast, after a crooked and double policy, sided with the latter, and sent to their aid 1,000 soldiers. In the first battle the Fantees were repulsed and put to flight, and the whole English force, too brave to retreat, fell upon the field. There is hardly a more hopeful field for Christian missions in all Africa, and it is the design of the American Board of Missions to establish one at Cape Coast Castle as soon as suitable men can be found to conduct it.

We shall pass by the tribes in the neighbourhood of the American and British colonies, in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and on the Gambia and Senegal, as their character is more generally known. The influence of these colonies has already demonstrated the capability of rapid advancement among the native tribes.

Near the sources of the Senegal, and Gambia, and Niger, and spread over large portions of the interior, are a nume-

rous and enterprising people, called the Foulahs, or Fellatahs, of a copper or bright brown complexion, fine, commanding countenances, and intellectual physiognomy. Their language is soft and musical, and has been called the *Italian* of Africa. They possess the art of working the ores, and of making steel from iron. From their friendly feelings towards foreigners, their excellent traits of moral character, and their ingenuity and industry, great hopes are placed in them for the regeneration of Central Africa.

Besides the nations I have referred to, which are considered as the aboriginal inhabitants, there are the Moors and Arabs, who possess great power in the interior countries. The Moors are located along the southern border of the great Desert, and form, of course, the northern limits of the Negro countries. They are descended from the ancient Numidians, Phoenicians, and Romans, of the Carthaginian empire. The Arabs are of two classes; some dwelling in fixed habitations, as the Shouas around Lake Tchad; others are Bedouins or wanderers, driving their flocks from place to place, or engaging in the caravan trade across the deserts. The Moors—and there is too much reason to connect with them the Arabs—are the direst curses of Africa, perpetuating the interior slave trade, almost invariably persecuting and robbing every European traveller who falls in their way, and throwing innumerable obstacles in the path of discovery.

As neither the Moors nor the Arabs, have ever been accused or suspected of any native inferiority, they furnish an excellent standard with which to compare the Negro. There are some points of striking contrast.

The Moor, with every traveller, has the reputation of being cruel and vindictive, and thoroughly possessed of the most genuine selfishness of which human nature is capable. The Negro is friendly, hospitable, and generous. Mungo Park furnishes us with a perfect illustration of this opposition of moral traits. He fell into the hands of the Moors, was robbed, abused, and barely escaped with his life. He fled until exhausted, and sheltered himself from a storm beneath a tree. A negro woman found him, just at night, and invited him to her hut, where her maidens were spinning cotton. They ceased until a supper was prepared for him; then spread him a clean mat to sleep on; and when he had *apparently* fallen asleep, they pursued their labours, which

they lightened by an extempore song, of which he gives the following as an exact translation.

"The winds roared and the rains fell.—The poor white man, faint and weary, came and sat under our tree. He has no mother to bring him milk; no wife to grind his corn. Chorus. Let us pity the white man; no mother has he to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn." Park, vol. 1. p. 193.

An English lady,—the Dutchess of Devonshire—has very well preserved the plaintive simplicity, and almost the very words, of the song in the following version:—

"The loud wind roar'd, the rain fell fast,
The white man yielded to the blast;
He sat him down beneath our tree,
For weary, sad, and faint was he.
And ah! no wife or mother's care
For him the milk or corn prepare.
Chorus.—The white man shall our pity share;
Alas! no wife or mother's care
The milk or corn for him prepare."

"I was oppressed," says the noble traveller, "with such unexpected kindness, and sleep fled from my eyes."

In all the social and domestic relations, the Moor and the Negro are strongly contrasted. The former is despotic, unfeeling, and destitute of moral principle;—the latter is susceptible of strong attachments and the claims of truth. "Strike me," said a young Negro to Park, "*but do not curse my mother.*" He gave expression to a sentiment, which, wherever the slave trade has not destroyed the native character, is a national one. The same traveller was present at a funeral lament over a young man, slain by the Moors. The chorus of his mother's song was, "*He never told a lie.*" Had it been the case of a Moor, she might have said with equal justness, "*He never told the truth.*"

The grossness of the Moorish character is illustrated by his ideal of female beauty. In his view but two things are necessary for the education of a perfect belle,—rich camel's milk and a good whip. When his youthful daughter has satisfied the simple appetite of health, the lash is applied and another bowl of milk must be swallowed.* The more nature revolts, the more efficiently is this *tight lacing* applied, until the object is accomplished. From three years'

* Park, vol. 1. p. 149. Caillie, 2. 66.

discipline of this kind, his hopeful daughter acquires a protuberancy of cheeks and lips absolutely incredible. Her general form becomes that of a horizontally elongated sphere. When she takes a promenade, a strong slave at each arm must support her; and when she mounts her camel, travellers have witnessed the services of six put in requisition. The Moorish matron then looks exultingly upon her daughter, as undoubtedly destined to grace the seraglio of some high-born prince.

The Arab of Central Africa is different both from the Moor and Negro. He is arrogant, proud, and deceitful, of a fiery, poetic temperament. The Negro manifests his feelings by action; the Arab by passionate, extravagant expression. He has three objects of most devout adoration,—his faith, his horse, and his mistress. The neighings of his steed, he likens to the thunders of heaven; the flashing of his eye, to the lightning's glance; the graceful arch of his neck, to the bow of heaven; his tail, to the foaming mountain torrent; and his shock in battle, to the whirlwind's might. His Arab bride is "beauty's self shining in matchless symmetry." She is the brightest star in the polished arch of heaven, whose light the dark night cannot quench; or is like the gushing spring in the burning desert, or like the polar star to the wildered caravan.

The Negro, as the observations of Denham prove to us, is not always destitute of the high poetic temperament of the Arab. Where he has learned the Arabic language, and is placed on an equal footing, he hardly discloses any inferiority in this respect, and in others, he exhibits nobler traits.

A Musselman prince, Abdulkader, sent two knives to Domel, a Negro chieftain, by his ambassador, who delivered them to Domel with this message: "With this knife Abdulkader will condescend to shave the head of Domel, if Domel will embrace the Mohammedan faith, and with this other knife, Abdulkader will cut Domel's throat, if Domel refuses to embrace it:—take your choice." Domel coolly replied that he chose *neither*, civilly dismissed the ambassador, and prepared for war. In the result the Musselman was brought before the Negro, a prisoner, in irons. "Abdulkader, answer me this question," said Domel: "If the chance of war had placed me in your situation, and you in mine, how would you have treated me?" "I would have

thrust my spear into your heart," replied Abdulkader, "and I know that a similar fate awaits me." "Not so (said the high-minded and generous Negro); my spear is indeed red with the blood of your subjects killed in battle, and I could now give it a deeper stain by dipping it in your own; but this would not build up my towns, nor restore to life the thousands who fell in the woods. I will not therefore kill you in cold blood, but I will retain you as my slave, until I perceive that your presence in your own kingdom will be no longer dangerous to your neighbours; and then I will consider of the proper way of disposing of you." Park, vol. 1., p. 234. After three months, *he restored him to his throne.*—Did our limits allow, many similar illustrations might be presented.

The African Arab is superiour to the Moor, but inferiour to the Negro in the susceptibility of generous and friendly feelings towards those who are foreign to his faith and country. The traveller may possibly conciliate the Arab chief by rich presents and extravagant admiration of the beauty and fleetness of his steed, so as to receive respectful treatment, and when he departs the chief may give him a dignified farewell, at the door of his tent, with "Allah il Allah; (God is God) may you live to see your *wives* and children."

When Major Laing was about to take leave of the Negro chieftain Falaba, with whom he had found, for some days, a friendly home, he accompanied me, says the traveller, some distance from his tent. "At length he stopped, and said, he was now to see me for the last time. The tears were in his eyes, and the power of utterance seemed for a while to have forsaken him; then, holding my hand still fast, he said, White man, think of Falaba, for Falaba will always think of you." While the Arab, with all his high-born enthusiasm, is fickle, arrogant, and deceitful, there is in the nature of the Negro a foundation for all the nobler sentiments and exalted patriotism of the Greek or Roman.

In these views of the character and physical resources of the inhabitants of Central and Western Africa, we have the fullest assurance, that under favouring influences they will rise to great power and national distinction. It is true the slave trade has brought them, in some places, to the lowest degradation which humanity can reach,—has forbidden commerce, discouraged industry, and cherished whatever is base and malignant in human passions. But away from its

influence the Negroes possess a firmness of attachment to their country, a spirit of patriotism, and a strength of national peculiarities, which are rarely surpassed. It is the united testimony of Burckhardt*—who saw the Negroes only in the hands of the Nubian slave traders, and never in their native countries,—and of Park, of Denham and Clapperton, of Pinney, and of Wilson and Wyncoop,—from personal acquaintance with the Negroes on their native soil, that they have hardly seen any reason to suppose their intellectual attributes inferior to those of the white man; and they express a strong conviction that a pure religion, with the arts and sciences, may ultimately raise them to an equality with European nations.

But in addition to the resources of Africa and the character of her inhabitants, there are some general aspects of great interest to those who look and labour for her redemption. It will be readily acknowledged, that it is not in the power of foreign nations to stop the slave trade by military force. Should they maintain a navy upon the coast, guarding it from Cape Negro to the Senegal, that would not stop it. The interior trade, which is by far the worst, and is like a vulture preying upon the very vitals of the race, would still be carried on to the Barbary States, to Egypt and Arabia, and perhaps with redoubled activity. The emancipation of Africa can be effected only from within herself. Her nations must be raised to that moral and political power which will combine them in firm resistance against oppression. To do this the chief points of commercial influence upon the coast, and of access to the interior, must be occupied by strong, well regulated colonies, from which civilization and religion may radiate to the surrounding regions; until the powerful tribes, now engaged in the traffic of their brethren, shall abandon it and forbid it. It is vain to fancy, in defiance of demonstration, that any other mode of operations will succeed. The Moravians, who had never been baffled in their projects, who have braved alike the everlasting terrors of polar storms and the burning heats of the equator, who have always been accus-

* "I have already observed that different characters are assigned to different countries, and all that I observed of them has not diminished my belief, that with proper education, the black nations might be taught to approach, and perhaps to equal the white." *Travels in Nubia*. By J. L. Burckhardt, London: 1822, p. 303.

tomed to meet, and overcome the wrath of man and the wrath of the elements, have been baffled upon the coast of Africa. Attempts at sixteen different points, made with the heroism of martyrs, to establish schools and missions, they have been forced to abandon, and to retire within the protection of the British colonies. And they now despair of every process, but that of commencing at these radiant points, and proceeding gradually outwards, until the work is done.

Now it happens, by a wonderful arrangement of Divine Providence, that at the moment when the Christian philanthropists of Europe and America are waking up for the redemption of Africa ; at the moment when science, the arts, and commerce, and our holy religion, stand ready to visit her ; these grand central points and strong holds are thrown open to them. The British have possessions on the Senegal and Gambia, and colonies at Sierra Leone and Cape Coast Castle ; and the American Colonization Society possess Liberia, and the mouth of the Niger is beginning to be occupied by British commerce. These must be the great depots of African commerce, and the sources of influence over the interior. And they are in part already occupied. The Wesleyans alone, of England, have in the Gambia settlements 535 communicants, and in their schools 220 scholars. In Sierra Leone, they have 758 church members, and 877 scholars. Various Societies in this country have interesting missions in Liberia, and a desire for schools is becoming general among the neighbouring tribes.

Among all the colonial stations, the American Colonization Society has evidently obtained a most fortunate location. From the excellence of the harbour, in entering or clearing which, a disaster has hardly occurred, the coasting trade will concentrate there, from a great distance, for exchange with foreign commerce, and a vast interior will pour itself in at that point. It has for some time been contemplated to cut a great highway of nations from Monrovia to Timbuctoo—a magnificent project, which the commercial interests in Africa stand ready to assist. Many of the native chiefs favour it—a triumphant proof of the good influence of the colony ; and should the enterprise be carried through, the caravans of the Foulahs, and all the resources of the upland districts, will then come to Liberia. Thus has every thing been conspiring to open the way for Christian

philanthropy to achieve her divinest wonders amid the nations that sit in darkness, and to found Free States upon the coast of Africa, which, perchance, shall rival the enterprise of ancient Carthage, and old Egypt's power and Ethiopia's grandeur. Whoever shall assist in founding the contemplated College at Liberia, or even a common school, and above all, whoever shall give his own life to the cause, shall be instrumental in bearing heaven's grace and earth's richest gifts to a mighty nation. He may not penetrate the mines of her mountains, and bring up from their buried deeps the gold and gems of commerce; but he may penetrate the mines of her moral darkness, and bring up from thence "the gem of an immortal spirit, flashing with the light of intellect, and radiant with the hues of Christian graces," and may polish and present it—a glorious specimen—to the cabinet of heaven.

We regard these two co-existent movements—the movement of philanthropy and freedom in Christian lands, and the movement of preparation upon the Western coast, by which channels for benevolent influences are opened,—as commissioned of heaven to call with united voice upon every friend of humanity for his noblest efforts to hasten the coming day of Africa's moral and political salvation.

But at the same time that these two movements are bearing upon the destinies of the Western coast, another movement, of an inverse direction, but of equal promise, is commencing in the Eastern. The Ottoman power has for a long time possessed the northern and eastern parts of Africa, upon the Mediterranean and Red Seas, and has been almost the sole sustainer of the interior slave trade. By keeping open the slave markets of Egypt and Arabia, and the Mediterranean coast, and by his inhuman policy and intolerant religion, he has discouraged all honourable commerce, and patronized the caravan slave traders who cross the deserts to the Negro countries. But the great Ottoman empire is now crumbling to dust. Egypt and the Barbary States no longer add to its strength. Arabia is divided into numerous tribes which the Mohammedan religion can no longer bind together. Around the whole eastern and north-eastern region, and up through Arabia into Asia Minor, society is like a huge mountain, in which the powers of cohesion have been gradually dissolved. Avalanche after ava-

lanche comes tumbling down, and the whole will soon be levelled as the basis of a new and richer soil.

When, therefore, civilization and science, and political power, shall commence their march from Western Africa into the central regions, they will no longer meet from the east and north the Turkish power, or any other obstacle, which can stay their progress. Besides, European commerce and influence are taking possession of the Mediterranean, and a milder policy is pervading the surrounding countries, and the principles of science and freedom are diffusing themselves; so that it is a humanizing agent which is disintegrating the social mass, in order that it may be recombined upon a more perfect model.

In this strange co-existence and combination of circumstances, so widely distant and yet closely united, so opposite in their character, yet similar in their tendency, there is surely something prophetic—something worthy of profound regard. For as the distant island, unseen through the common medium of vision, sometimes paints itself in perfect outline upon the misty cloud; and as the distant ship, ere she heaves in sight, sometimes heralds her approach by hanging from the sky in magic form of hull and masts and shrouds above the coast she longs for; “so do the spirits of great events often stride on before the events,” and herald their coming in the atmosphere of human observation.

It becomes the Christian philanthropist, therefore, as he contemplates these movements, fraught with so much hope to the future, and begins to comprehend the unfolding plans of God's mysterious providence, by which he is giving truth and freedom to the world;—it becomes him to bear with patience present evils, and to labour patiently to remove them. Let him not think to urge the mechanism of Divine Providence with high-pressure velocity, over rough and smooth; but rather let him follow its leadings, and walk in its path.

One topic more suggests itself as worthy of some consideration. If Western and Central Africa fulfil the destiny which God and nature seem to design for her, she must become almost exclusively the coloured man's home. Her climate, although in some places healthy to any constitution, is generally the white man's grave; and the riches of her soil can never be gathered by his hand. But it is the very climate which the constitution of the Negro loves. And it

seems to have been so ordered, that if the European, after having trampled upon all human and divine rights, in order to feed his avarice upon the wrongs of Africa, shall be tempted still further by her gold and wealth to take possession of her soil, then the laws of nature shall be commissioned to execute upon him the penalty of a capital offence ; and the air he breathes, and the beneficent heavens, shall arm themselves with death, to sweep him away, and reserve the land, which has been bereft of her sons, for their return. The God of nature has established an instinctive repugnance to the social union between that race and nearly all others. And gravitation does not more surely call back to the earth the heavy bodies which violence hath for a moment exiled, than Africa will gather back her exiled bands from all places of their banishment.

It requires but little foresight to determine what the result will be in our own country.

The products of our southern states can never compete with the products of Africa, when her cotton, and coffee, and rice, and sugar-cane shall be cultivated by free, intelligent labour, and the timber of her forests shall be floated down her broad rivers, and given to commerce. Slavery then, if not before, must go down ; and southern enterprise will receive a better reward from free labour. Could the present plans of Colonization be carried into effect, it would soon be more difficult to prevent, than it now is to promote the emigration of Africans.

It is perhaps a feature of these latter times, that a Divine agency is walking among the nations of the earth, battering down the strong holds of Satan, and guiding the "sacramental host" to the right points of attack upon the empire of darkness. In relation to no country is this more strikingly displayed than to Africa. And unless nature's resources must be squandered in vain, and Christian philanthropy be baffled, and the great movements of the moral and political world come to nought, the period must ere long arrive, when she shall be free, enlightened, and powerful, and shall lavish her blessings among the kingdoms of the earth, as freely as they have lavished upon her, chains, and ignominy.

ART. II. THOUGHTS ON MODERN LITERATURE.

By HON. GEORGE LUNT, Newburyport, Mass.

THE different moral tone, which characterizes the writings of the present day, compared with those of the fathers of English literature, is such as cannot fail to strike the most casual reader. It is not so much, that there is any deficiency of books upon the great subjects connected with human improvement, or that the authors themselves seem at all wanting in just views of the real interests of mankind. On the contrary, all means available to human effort are forced into the service of morality. Society is actually overwhelmed with the praises of whatever is excellent. Science in her cold, hard way, has undertaken to demonstrate its value. Wisdom uplifts her modest voice; and she has her own hearers: and Folly, throwing over her shoulders the mantle of Philosophy, grows didactic and instructive, until our hearts become sick within us, and we are almost ready to despise those things which deserve our highest veneration and love, and which of themselves are attractive with a thousand beauties. One may now be convinced by mathematical demonstration of the superiority of virtue to vice; but is it not sometimes the case, that the very means which are victorious to convince, fail in power to convert to any good purpose? One may certainly be driven to assent to conclusions, of which he feels neither the force nor the truth; and may store his mind with innumerable maxims, without arriving at any higher eminence in wisdom or virtue. The reason may be overpowered, while the feelings are untouched. The intellect may be enlarged, and the heart remain unimproved. We bow down to an idol which we call Reason, and are too often careless or forgetful, whether this object of our worship be a true or a false divinity. The time has been when men were willing to trust to the ordinary impulses of human nature. They gave themselves up to admiration and pity, and all the more generous affections, without hesitation and without fear. They *felt* that they were right, and they needed no more convincing argument. But now-a-

days, the world has grown much wiser ; and where we were once satisfied with feeling, we must needs argue and dispute. We forget that all men are not capable of reasoning correctly. We forget that we cannot always be sure of the soundness of our conclusions, even when we have taken the most careful pains. We forget, in fine, that men have been and may be argued into the most absurd results ; and that passion and prejudice will artfully interweave themselves with our nicest speculations. It is true that Reason is herself immutable. But we are apt to mistake the sacrifice for the altar,—disputation for logic,—reasoning for reason. We confound the mistaken processes of our own weak minds with the invariable principles of Truth, and thus sylogise ourselves into errors which are inextricable, because we are determined to convince ourselves that we are right. The world now deems itself interested only in realities, strangely and falsely so called : for the things which we so regard are indeed the unsubstantial and evanescent ; and things distant and indistinct the future will show to be the only and truly real. The daily cares that press upon our thoughts are now made to constitute the daily food and nurture of the mind. And sanguine Hope with her buoyant wings, and Fancy brilliant with the hues of heaven, and Imagination that compasses the illimitable universe, must fold their pinions, and shrink away from a power, who without their ministry must become in a moment but a cold and lifeless abstraction. But is it not true, that all men aim to escape from the present ? It is not to-day, that we are supremely blest ; but yesterday, we say to ourselves, we were happy, and to-morrow shall be like it, and much more abundant. The slave of care will struggle to forget himself. He remembers a time when he was not so burdened, and anticipates a period when he shall be free from the perplexities which now oppress him ; and the sick man turns upon his restless pillow, and recalls the elastic step of his early youth, or dreams of breezes, full of the sweet south, that shall yet breathe vigour into his frame and renew the energies of his exhausted heart. And what, may we ask, has reason to do with the thoughts that soothe, and the hopes that cheer their minds ! We satisfy ourselves with the suggestions of imagination : we become happy upon the blessings which hope insinuates ; and life derives its very spring and buoyancy from things, which reason can neither controul nor

supply. It is under these influences, that the tired hand raises itself, and the flagging spirits are encouraged to renewed and more vigorous exertion, and that we press forward again and again, to the vast pursuits of the world, with the incitements of hope throbbing and thrilling at our bosoms.

It is in vain, therefore, to tell us, that the operations of the imagination are inconsistent with the real requirements of life. It is vain to say, that it is not necessary to our very existence. It has the power to lift the burdens which weigh upon the present. It cheers and renovates us by recalling into more splendid being the lost glories which brightened the past. It has the magic art to clothe the future with more exquisite visions of magnificence and beauty than the present ever knows.

The theory which would confine us down to the mere objects of our senses humbles our nature, and deprives it of some of its most ennobling attributes. It is not surely the cultivation of the fancy, but its neglect and abuse, which is ever injurious to the true interests of society. But it is strange indeed that we should be always studying text-books for the improvement of our other faculties, and should suffer that one to run wild and luxuriate at will, which needs the most constant and attentive direction, and upon which, more than any of them, our daily happiness depends.

It cannot be denied that, after the Scriptures themselves, the books which have exerted the most powerful influence upon human life, have been works of imagination. From childhood to old age, and through every variety of character, they have governed the mind by the same irresistible and intense interest. How many characters indeed have been moulded and fixed by the narrative of that entertaining voyager, upon whose story we have all of us hung delighted in our youth, until his solitary island seemed to us fairy-land, only that we believed its marvels to be truer than any history. How many human beings have caught their more exalted emotions from the pages of that mightiest master of thought and passion, whose wildest conceptions seem less like fiction than the daily occurrences of our own existence! For whoever mused with Hamlet, or acted with Othello, without realizing their life and presence like that of his most familiar and ordinary friends? Or, to turn to a graver, but no less imaginative specimen of ficti-

tious composition, how many have wandered with delight over the wondrous story of good and honest Mr. Bunyan! How many "trembling minds and hearts afraid" have gone with valiant Christian upon his pious pilgrimage, and felt their own faith strengthened by his steadfastness, their own courage confirmed by his example! We presume, too, that, considered apart from its sacred character, no more entertaining and instructive reading can be found, than that which is contained in the allegorical portions of Scripture itself. What lofty and beautiful images are breathed by the fervent spirit of the divine Psalmist and his royal son! What terrible sublimity rolls upon the awful strains of the Arabian patriarch! What holy sweetness, what heavenly enthusiasm, what magnificent imagery interweave themselves with the thread of the Old Testament narration, like pearls mingling with gold! Who has ever contrived stories so true to nature, so touching in expression, so beautiful in their application, so interesting in their structure, as the parables of our Saviour himself! The Bible is full of the expression of the tenderest as well as the loftiest imagination, and disdains not to clothe its instructions, its threatenings and its consolations, with the flowers that were wreathed in Paradise.

But to confine our attention to compositions of merely human origin, certainly a vast proportion of the literature of the present day is deficient in the higher characteristics, which distinguished the writings of our predecessors. There is plenty of light literature, it is true, and much which is both entertaining and attractive, to a certain degree; but there seems to be an air of superficialness and shallowness about most even of its best productions, which effectually prevents it from entering very deeply into our sympathies, from dwelling and incorporating itself, if we may so speak, with the texture of our minds, and becoming, as it were, a part and portion of ourselves. There are undoubted and illustrious exceptions to so general a charge. It may also be observed, that we seldom regard the writings of our contemporaries and companions with the same impartiality as that with which we look upon the productions of the distant and the dead. For Time, which separates the man of genius from the envy and malice of the world; Time, which covers his failings, and spiritualizes and exalts his nature; Time, which transmits to us only the higher and more

etherial attributes of those glorious beings, breaks down also the earthly barriers which limited their renown to their own kindred and country ; it sweeps away the prejudices, which veiled their fame. They are no longer Spaniards and Italians, Englishmen and Americans : they claim a communion with the human race, and we yield them our veneration and love, as the benefactors of mankind.

But there is something in the older writers intrinsically superiour to that which now claims our attention and praise. Take some of the standard classics of the English language, and how rarely will the most judicious critic have occasion for finding fault ? But as to the mass of the current literature of the day,—all men are competent to criticise the flippant pertness of its expressions, and its ill-considered and unsound speculations. The pen seems to have been taken up as if for the preparation of some unwelcome task, which, as might be anticipated, is executed with slovenly carelessness, and laid aside by both writer and reader without regret. But the eloquent simplicity of the older authors, their sound learning, the elegant variety of their careful diction, their fine thoughts and profound reflections, show that they came with minds prepared for the business which they had undertaken. And thus, “long choosing and beginning late,” and writing with that cautious deliberation, they finally produced those noble works, which are worthy the devotion of a life ; forever honourable to themselves, forever profitable to mankind. The popular works of the present day are many of them justly so named. They, indeed, gratify the popular fancy, which is but for an instant, and, as that changes, they die, and are forgotten. They are created amidst the bustle and excitement of momentary caprice, to suit a taste as trustless and inconstant as a summer cloud ; they contain in themselves no elements of solid continuance ; they amuse, it is possible, for a day ; they live without renown, and perish without honour ; and the places which knew them are filled again and again by others, as trifling and as idle as themselves.

Not so is it with the other class of productions to which we have alluded. They were the fruits of no instantaneous impulse of the fancy : they were written to gratify no popular appetite, and to minister to no depraved taste : and they suit not, it may be, the fashion of the times. But age soon frees them from the passing prejudice of the day, and then

they live and flourish forever ! They appeal to the common sympathies and sensibilities of our nature ; they enter into the feelings which have characterized our race in every stage of its progress : they strike upon chords which have throbbed in every human bosom. Man is their hero, and the world their stage. They think for all time, and their just guerdon is immortality !

We were led into these reflections by looking over lately some of the minor poems of Milton, and could not help thinking how much more truly valuable was a line of his writing, than whole libraries of many modern compositions. They are true to nature, true to philosophy, true to heaven ! There is something more in them than makes up the ordinary attributes of fine writing, something more than fancy, more than imagination, more than learning, more than genius ;—there is soul ! There is a fire which caught its blaze at no earthly altar ; there is a grand purpose conceived in the deep solitude of the author's mind. There is not a thought, which looks like grasping at present renown. There is, to be sure, the anticipation of glory ;—but the glory which Milton coveted was not the acclamation of the crowd around him. There is indeed a soul breathing from his pages, conscious of its own objects, serving its own ends, performing its own resolves, unpolluted by the vices of men, but serene, heroic and unshaken amidst the thronging tumult of an unstable world. There is a conscience, which degrades itself by no base compliances, a heart which holds its hopes under higher controul than the world's acclaim, an intellect unallured by interest and far too great for vanity, its only impulse duty, its only law its own approbation. It countenances no false philosophy ; it sinks into no morbid despondency : it is full of hope and courage, and sublime contemplation : it searches into the business of the world with a just appreciation ; it mingles in the affairs of life with a generous aim : it has nourished its meditations amidst the gardens of Sion : the flowers it has gathered have been watered by the dews of

“Siloa's fount, that flowed,
Fast by the oracle of God.”

We do not mean to be understood that the authors of the present day are to be expected to write like Milton, and

some of his cotemporaries ; for with different degrees of power, the same spirit seems to have been working in the minds of all those great men. A genius like Milton's indeed must exist alone and unapproachable. It is the wonder of its own era, and the admiration and example of other ages. The great events which agitated their day have been wanting to our own. The influences and the emotions which tended to elevate their minds, have operated more feebly upon ours. The stormy waves which beat upon their shores with a dash like thunder, have flowed by us gently and almost imperceptibly, like the receding tide of a summer stream. But there can be no time which does not require encouragements to virtue ; no age, in which that literature is not really valuable, which tends to elevate and dignify the character of man. But the lighter productions of genius, whether good or bad, will always exert a vast influence upon the popular mind : and we cannot count that labour vain, which may have some influence in directing the thoughts to those purer fountains of meditation and philosophy. It is sad, indeed, to reflect that literature, which ought to be able to lead and to form the public taste, is too apt to derive its own characteristics from the tendency of the times : and thus acting and re-acting upon each other, a day of inferior men and ignoble deeds will encourage corrupt and feeble habits of thought, in those whose duty it is to resist such influences, and to stem the torrent of a debasing age. That literature which serves only to entertain an idle hour, is not performing any of its higher purposes. It is its duty to devote itself to the encouragement of the better emotions of the heart and mind, and while it pleases, never to forget, that its chief aim should be to raise and instruct. But whoever reads much of the fictitious writing now popular, will find himself lulled into a dreamy and enervating voluptuousness, or perhaps new strength imparted to his evil passions : or it may be, it will unsettle his notions of right and wrong, will encourage a false estimate of the allotments of life, and cherish imaginary but fatal discontents. Let such an one turn then to the pages of a writer like Milton, and consider how he regarded the unavoidable misfortunes of existence. What deep and serene contentment breathes in this sonnet upon his blindness:

When I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent, which is death to hide,
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide;
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
 I fondly ask : But Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
 Either man's works or his own gifts; who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best : his state
 Is kingly ; thousands at his bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

And how nobly does a strong heart and an unbroken mind speak in the thrilling language with which he addresses a friend upon the same subject.

Syriac, this three years day these eyes, though clear
 To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
 Bereft of light their seeing have forgot,
 Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
 Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
 Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
 Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
 Of heart or hope ; but still bear up and steer
 Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask ?
 The Conscience, Friend, t' have lost them overlied
 In liberty's defence, my noble task,
 Of which all Europe talks, from side to side :
 This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask,
 Content though blind, had I no better guide.

It is impossible to read such productions without becoming wiser and better : for they encourage our nobler faculties ; they cherish our more exalted purposes ; they raise our spirits and warm our hearts ; they cheer us on the rough road of duty, and we go forward on the business of life under the promptings of purer and more generous emotions. You read the writings of Milton and some of his compeers, and you feel that you have been in the presence of great men : and if the majesty of their genius awes you, it also comforts you with grander ideas of the capacity of the human intellect ; it inspires you to loftier and more strenuous effort for your own cultivation, and the improvement of others. On the contrary, many of the trifling productions which are such modern favourites, seem to us to have been written with the direct purpose of debasing

our nature. It is not likely, that this is generally the case ; but so much the more melancholy is the reflection, if they are written to commend themselves to a depraved taste already formed and open for their reception. At any rate, they are calculated to throw a veil over the brightness of our moral perceptions, and to confound in our minds the eternal distinctions of virtue and vice. They rob us of the prouder hopes of life, and chain us down to the sordid and selfish maxims of the world.

The true purpose of imagination is of a higher nature, we believe, than is generally apprehended. It is not simply to amuse an idle hour, still less to minister to a depraved taste, that she spreads her starry wings, and compasses the broad and teeming earth, and the illimitable amplitude of Heaven. Her storehouse is a treasury of uncounted gems, —pearl and opal, diamond and gold. As the liberal elements dispense their bounty, so she diffuses her golden gifts. There is no age, or climate, or condition of men, in which she has not given to glory its chiefest honour, and its sweetest magic to beauty. It was by her aid that the early Chaldean looked into the blue depths of upper air, and drew thence the mystic theories of his ancient wisdom ; and upon her pinions was wafted the soul of

“ That blind old man of Scio's rocky isle,”

whose stirring songs yet echo upon the sanguine plain and around the battlements of old Troy. Upon the mountain tops she hath her dwelling, and in every green field ! The deep echoes of primeval forests are filled with her language, and Ocean as it swells and thunders, answers to her voice. Sometimes she may be found reposing in the calm loveliness of a summer landscape ; and sometimes she builds her pavilion upon the tumultuous current of the storm ! Other things are partial and limited in their character and operation ; but her empire is unbounded as the universe. There is no human being so cold and dull, in whose feelings and affections she has not some share. The savage in his desert, and the philosopher in his closet, are equally within the sphere of her controul. She is powerful to melt, to persuade and to teach. It is her office to elevate, to refine, and to humanize the mind : and whether she wanders amidst the enchantments of Arabia, or clothes the rugged hills of Scotland

with glory and delight,—her influence is acknowledged, and her dominion allowed.

It is the well known remark of a great English statesman, that if he might write the popular songs, he cared not who made the laws of the nation. The observation is manifestly founded upon a just appreciation of human character, and is but a commentary upon the conduct of Lycurgus, who introduced the poems of Homer into Greece, at the same time that he was reforming the legislation of Sparta. How often has the stirring lay aided the patriot in the achievement of his triumphs! How often has the hero's heart throbbed with higher energies as he listened to the thrilling numbers of the Muse's lyre! History is full of the triumphs of song; and a touching incident of this nature is related in Plutarch's life of Nicias, where he tells us, that after a battle unfortunate for the Athenians, their Sicilian conquerors freely released their captives, and showered upon them benefits seldom bestowed upon the vanquished, in reward for the recitation of a few verses of Euripides; and which is the same story so beautifully alluded to by a poet of our own times:—

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fettered thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar:
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermastered victor stops,—the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimeter
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

If then works of imagination exert a more powerful and constant influence upon the popular mind than graver treatises, how necessary it is that they should be founded upon the truest models, and be dedicated to the best purposes. It is in vain to attempt to subdue the outpourings of imagination; nor can it be in any way desirable. Other thoughts may be necessary, but her promptings are a delight. It is her proper business to make goodness attractive, and to scatter flowers over the rugged paths of duty. It is hers to cheer what misfortune depresses, and to gild the clouds of life with a halo of glory. It is surely the interest of society to see to her proper cultivation; and she well knows how to repay its care a thousand fold. When she is neg-

lected, she becomes, of necessity, depraved, and society feels the debasement in an infinite variety of ways: when her honour is secured, she calls around her the glories which have illuminated her past existence: and thus she gives a fresh charm to virtue, and throws a newer lustre upon happiness.

Above all, let not him who is conscious of a just and noble purpose fear what some have strangely said, that the day of poetry has gone by, and that he will want readers. For this indeed can never be, while there is any thing in the condition of nature or of life, to impress us more deeply than the ordinary current of existence. It can never be, while a hue of melancholy shadows any spirit, or a spring of joy gushes in any heart. It would contradict the very constitution of human nature itself. The sailor thrills upon the bounding sea; the student revels in the luxury of solitary thought; the husbandman gladdens in the freshness of spring. And all these are poetical; and the daybreak scattering the silence of darkness; the descending splendours of evening; the gray twilight; the array of night; hill and valley, stream and forest, flower and ocean; whatever is noble in the history of mind; whatever is lovely and affecting in the story of life. To say that the day of poetry is gone by, were indeed to say, what none of us would willingly believe: for it would be to say, that the world has grown old and imbecile, that its veins are chilled, and its end is nigh;—that the enchantments of youth are vanished;—that the glory of manhood is a shadow;—that his better hopes are but folly, and the purposes of existence only degrading. It were to say that the freshness has passed from the leaf, and the sunbeam from the canopy of heaven: that life indeed is worthless, and creation a blank!

And so, indeed, from day to day, and from year to year, pass on and perish the vanities of the world; so pass its idle fashions and its heartless follies; and sorrowing not for them, we might say without regret,

“Pass on, relentless world!”

But so passeth not whatever is truly valuable and excellent. So can never pass those loftier aspirations, which are conceived in the purity of a good heart, and are devoted to the exalted purpose of advancing and ennobling the human

character. So can never pass the glory of intellectual achievements, which, like Milton's, have caught their inspiration from a divine fountain, and whose hopes of endurance are built upon a foundation which is higher than the stars ! No generous impulse, no lofty action, no ardent and virtuous aspiration of one who sincerely devotes himself to the advancement and elevation of his kind, shall ever perish :—his fervent enthusiasm, his noble enterprises, his magnificent thoughts, his pure life, his charity to man, and his high trust in God, will be recorded for eternity, where the fashions of the world have neither part nor lot.

ART. III. ARE PEDOBAPTIST CHURCHES IN RECEIVING MEMBERS WARRANTED TO DISPENSE WITH INFANT BAPTISM ?

By REV. DANIEL DANA, D.D.

A QUESTION has been recently agitated in many of the New England churches, which has occasioned considerable difference in opinion ; and, in some cases, a correspondent difference in practice. These varieties in views and measures are probably increasing ; and if we judge from the aspects and spirit of the age, are likely still further to increase. To the question in view, we propose to give a brief discussion. Reduced to a definite form, it may stand as follows :

Is it consistent with the Bible, to admit to Pedobaptist churches, persons who give credible evidence of piety, but who do not believe that God requires them to offer their children in baptism ?

We enter on this discussion by remarking that, in the present case, as in other cases of difficulty or doubt, a correct decision is to be sought in a recurrence to great and acknowledged principles.

Most practical questions, whether they regard the duties of individual Christians or of churches, are easily settled.

Often they are decided by express scriptural injunction. Where this is not the fact, they may frequently be referred to some simple scriptural principle, whose decision is scarcely less plain and unequivocal. But there is a third case, where the principles which bear upon the point in question, are more complicated and various: and where truth can be discovered only by a careful estimate and comparison of different, and apparently conflicting considerations. If to this class belongs the question now under consideration—and this we think is the fact—it is not strange that it is found to be embarrassed with some difficulties; nor that different minds, equally sincere, and equally ardent in the pursuit of truth, have arrived at different conclusions respecting it.

In connection with these remarks, we now proceed to suggest some of those general principles which are involved in the present question, and which, as we conceive, must furnish the materials for its correct solution. This we will attempt to do with the utmost simplicity and brevity. Such is the largeness of the subject, as utterly to preclude the extended discussion of particular points. And were it otherwise, such probably is its familiarity to the minds of most readers of this work, as to render *hints* only either necessary or useful.

Infant baptism, we cannot but maintain, is an ordinance of God. Notwithstanding the doubts of its validity, entertained by a portion of the Christian church; notwithstanding the array of argument by many ingenious and powerful opposers, the basis on which it rests remains, in our view, firm and unshaken. From the undeniable and generally admitted fact, that under the ancient dispensation, children, as well as parents, were included in the covenant of God with his people, we argue that the same is their privilege and standing still. From this secondary fact we argue—and we think we may do it with confidence—that if, under the ancient dispensation, the initiatory seal of the covenant belonged, by divine appointment, to children, it belongs to them now. If, indeed, there had been, in either case, a repeal of the original institution, this would present an insurmountable difficulty. But of such repeal we find in Scripture no evidence, and no shadow of evidence. On the contrary, every thing, which bears on the point in the New Testament, whether it be argument or history, goes to con-

firm the authority and permanence of the original appointment ; and nothing to invalidate, or to qualify it. With all this, the verdict of the most authentic, and the most ancient ecclesiastical history, entirely corresponds.

Infant baptism is an ordinance of much meaning and importance. It is, as we have seen, the appointed seal of church membership. It forms the children of believers, with their parents, into one consecrated family. While it exhibits the native depravity of man, it exhibits too the heavenly antidote ;—cleansing by the blood of Christ, and sanctification by his Spirit. It constitutes a most powerful and affecting appeal to the strongest sensibilities, both of parents and children, in behalf of God and religion. At the same time, infant baptism, being an instituted rite, cannot occupy precisely the same place in religion, as those great and universal duties which result from the nature and unalterable relations of things. No one will maintain that it is a duty of equal importance with love to God and man, repentance for sin, or faith in the Lord Jesus.

Nor will it be denied, that the *evidence* in favour of infant baptism, being variously dispersed throughout the sacred oracles, and being partly indirect and inferential, may have frequently escaped those who were sincerely engaged in the pursuit of truth and duty. If, as is probably the fact, a material portion of this evidence has scarcely come into contact with the minds of many, even of the friends of infant baptism, it may surely, by reason of some early, but unperceived bias, or from some different cause, have been overlooked by others.

It must likewise be admitted, that the objections against the validity of infant baptism lie, more than in most similar cases, on the surface ; and are capable of being exhibited in bold relief. While the evidence in its favour is, in some instances, less obvious and imposing ; and requires, in order to its full perception, a depth and extent of research, a skill in comparison, and an accuracy of discrimination, to which few minds are habituated.

Hence it may be explained, that many a sincere lover of truth and duty, many an ardent friend to God and man, has been found, whose mind has not been reached by the evidence in favour of infant baptism. It would be uncharitable and unjust to deny, that to this description belong many among the living and the dead, many on this and the other

side of the Atlantic, who are to be numbered among the brightest ornaments of Christianity and of their age.

We now proceed to an additional principle, not less obvious in its truth or its importance, than any which has been suggested. It is incumbent on individual believers, and on Christian churches, to *love one another with pure hearts fervently*; to walk together in union; to sacrifice on the altar of peace every thing but essential truth and essential duty; in short, to *receive one another* as Christ, their common Saviour, has received them all.

It may now appear, perhaps, that we have brought the question in discussion to an issue satisfactory to ourselves, at least. Nothing, it may seem, remains, but to advance directly to the inference, that pedobaptist churches are both permitted and bound to admit as members, those who give evidence of real piety, though they may not embrace infant baptism as an ordinance of God. For what church, it may be asked, has a right to refuse those whom Christ receives now, and whom heaven will receive at last?

Still, we are constrained ingenuously to confess, that the subject is not, in our view, entirely relieved of embarrassment. Hitherto, we have presented little more than one side of it. But we are not less bound to present the other. Considerations remain, which, we humbly conceive, require a very serious attention.

Every Christian church which would prosper, or even permanently exist, must have some standard of belief and practice, common to all its members. In other words, it must have its Confession of faith. This Confession may be very concise; and perhaps ought to be so. But where is the Pedobaptist church whose articles, however few and short, do not embrace the church standing of the infants of believers, and of course, their baptism? This rite may not be essential to salvation. But may it not be essential to the order and well-being of a church on earth? We believe it to be an ordinance of Christ. Some of its reasons we know. But *all* its reasons we may *not* know; nor all the ramifications which connect it with the church's well-being. In dispensing with it, then, in the admission of members, do we not dispense with an ordinance of Christ—an ordinance, too, whose reasons, whose bearings, whose tendencies, whose importance, we do but imperfectly understand, and of course cannot adequately appreciate?

One of the principal advantages, indeed one of the grand reasons, of the formation of churches, is discipline and instruction—discipline and instruction brought to bear on the youngest members of the Christian family, who are capable subjects. But if the membership of children is not recognized, but denied, by their professing parents, how shall the church gain access to them. Will they not find an insurmountable obstruction in their way? On this principle, will not one great argument for parental care and fidelity in their education, be removed and lost? Will not the families of professors cease to be nurseries for the church, and for heaven?

One of the most imposing arguments in favour of the practice in view, is, that it is liberal and kind; that it disinterestedly seeks the good of its objects; that it makes sacrifices to promote it; that it cordially receives them while in material error, in the hope of gradually removing that error. But what if the very first step in this enlightening process, is one which goes to confirm and radicate the very error to be cured? Is there no danger lest, by this practice, we lead our *Baptist* friends to conclude, that we consider their mistake in denying the right of infants to baptism, a mistake of little importance? Is there no danger lest they view us, in maintaining this right, either half convinced, or little in earnest, or even positively insincere? And may not the same view be taken by others?

Before introducing a new practice into the church of God, it is indispensable to inquire: What is its tendency? Whither will it lead? What evils may naturally, perhaps necessarily, follow in its train?—In the present case, it is proposed to dispense, in admission to our churches, with a law of Christ, because it is a positive, and not a moral law; and of course, a noncompliance with it may consist with a pious heart? But the *Sabbath* is, in part at least, a positive, rather than a moral institution. And would it be right, or expedient, to admit to one of our churches, a good man who should be found indissolubly wedded to the Jewish Sabbath, and invincibly prejudiced against the Sabbath of Christians? Would it be right, or expedient, to admit a good man imbued with the Quaker prejudice, both against baptism and the Lord's supper? The fact is, that the dispensing power is a power doubtful, at best, in its nature; dangerous in its exercise; tremendous in its consequences. Its beginning is

like the *letting out of water*. Its end *may* too probably be an overflow of incalculable and destructive evils.

To some, perhaps, it may appear, that in refusing to admit to our churches, persons of the description mentioned we shall give the sanction of our example to those very views and measures of the antipedobaptists, of which we have been in the habit of complaining, as too narrow and exclusive. But this apprehension, we conceive, is altogether unfounded. The grand error of the antipedobaptists lies, if we do not mistake, in their denying the church membership of those who do not agree in their peculiar opinions and practices, and likewise in refusing to them even occasional communion. But to neither of these measures do we propose to give any countenance. So long, indeed, as our brethren of that class maintain that *immersion*, and that *in adult years*, is of the *essence of baptism*, so long will they probably plead, and with some plausibility, that consistency requires them to exclude from their churches, all who do not receive baptism agreeably to their views. And is it not at least questionable whether pedobaptist churches can consistently admit to their bosom, in other words, receive as co-partners in building the church of God, those who differ from them in regard to the very materials of which the church is to be built? The errors of those persons may not endanger the final salvation of others, or their own. But may they not go to mar the order, and undermine the very foundations of the church?

How the practice in view, were it introduced, would affect the great body of Baptist ministers and church members, we undertake not to divine. That it would tend to conciliate their candour and kind feelings, and thus promote mutual harmony between them and us, we are far from anticipating. Should it ever be viewed by them as an attempt on our part, to take possession of a portion of their property, we should be very little disappointed. Indeed, if even now, it puts their charity to the torture, to believe that we can be honest in maintaining the divine appointment of infant baptism, what will they think of us, when we shall have formally dispensed with this rite, in the case of a portion of our own members?

If the influence of the proposed measure on the mutual harmony of pedobaptist and antipedobaptist churches, is at best doubtful, there is another point which admits less

doubt. The former class of churches would too probably find their internal peace interrupted; perhaps effectually and finally destroyed. One subject of disagreement between their members would always exist. One topic of debate would be always at hand; a topic, it is confessed, not of radical importance. Yet who can be ignorant that such are the very topics which have ordinarily given birth to the most unpleasant and interminable discussions? It is a melancholy truth, but still a truth, that even among Christians, debates have usually been prolonged and acrimonious, in an *inverse* proportion to the real importance of their subjects. We should not do justice to the subject, did we not connect with its discussion a momentary glance at the signs and apparent tendencies of the present time. The spirit of the age is essentially and obviously revolutionary. In government and laws, in science and art, astonishing changes and, in many instances, astonishing improvements have taken place. If religion were a matter of human invention, and not of divine revelation, correspondent improvements might perhaps be expected in this also. But here, we have had a perfect, infallible standard, from the first. By this standard, every thing which comes in the guise of improvement should be scrutinized with eagle eye, before it is adopted. Innovations on first principles are, from the very nature of the case, to be strongly suspected. That the change to which the question under discussion refers, is a change of this character, we would be far from averring. Yet it embraces, as we honestly think, on the maturest reflection, more than at first *meets the eye*. We apprehend there is real danger that, if introduced, its first effect would be, to impair the sacredness and importance of infant baptism; the second, to bring it into disrepute; the third, to banish it altogether from our churches. How long, it may be asked, will a usage be likely to maintain its ground, whose opponents sternly maintain that it is of no authority, and whose very friends concede that it is of little importance?

Our readers will now perceive that we are utterly unprepared to approve the measure brought to view. But though we dare not propose or sanction the introduction of pious persons not believing in infant baptism into our churches, as regular members, we are equally decided in the opinion that every degree of kindness and charity should

be extended to individuals of this description. Indeed, we see not how persons baptized in infancy, and yet questioning the validity of infant baptism, can, consistently with their own views, come into our churches but by a second baptism; which is plainly inadmissible. But they should be treated with the utmost candour and kindness; and every prudent and Christian method should be employed to remove their perplexities, and increase their piety. Nor do we see any valid reason why members of Baptist churches, who are scattered among us, should not be cordially welcomed, not only to sit with us at the table of the Lord, but to unite with our churches in all their meetings for Christian instruction and edification.

On the whole, we cannot but apprehend that there are strong and decisive reasons which oppose the expression of an opinion on the part of any ecclesiastical body, formally recommending or sanctioning the adoption by our churches, of a new usage in the point under consideration. Cases, no doubt, frequently arise, in which a church may feel itself strongly tempted to meet the scruples of a tender conscience, by a relaxation of its rules. But facts of this kind are extremely apt to erect themselves into precedents. And surely all will admit that the comfort, and even the edification of the individual are less important than the order and peace of the churches. Should a case present itself to a particular church so strongly marked, as apparently to demand and to justify a relaxation, it were better, even here, that the church should proceed purely on its own responsibility. And it should apply to every such case, a distinct and most deliberate action. On this supposition, its procedure will appear, what it really is, an exception to a general rule. But let it not be forgotten that whenever a reception of this character shall become frequent, the rule will too probably be displaced and destroyed by the exception.

ART. IV. INTERPRETATION OF ISAIAH 7: 14—16.

By Rev. N. S. FOLSOM, FRANCES TOWN, N. H.

14. Wherefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign.
Behold! the virgin conceiveth,
And beareth a son,
And calleth his name Immanuel.
15. Butter and honey shall he eat,
Until he shall know how to refuse the evil,
And choose the good.
16. For before the child shall know how to refuse the evil,
And choose the good,
The land shall be desolate,
Whose two kings thou dost dread.

THE interpretations of this passage are principally three:—(1) that it is *directly* and *solely* prophetic of the virgin Mary and our Lord Jesus Christ; (2) that it is prophetic of a child *born of a virgin within three years* after the prophecy was uttered, and that this event is *symbolical* of the birth of our Saviour; (3) that the prophet speaks of a child born either of his own wife, or of a young woman just married, and that this child has no reference to the Messiah.

It is the object of this article to state objections to the last two methods of exegesis, answer objections to the first, and show reasons why the first should be preferred.

1. The third hypothesis has found an advocate not only in Gesenius, but also in Dr. John Pye Smith, who defends it in his "Scripture testimony to the Messiah." According to his opinion, the word translated "*virgin*," designates the young wife of king Ahaz, and the birth of her son was the confirmation of the predicted deliverance. "It appears probable," (I quote his language) "that the word *virgin* is also applied to a young woman of high rank, very recently married." It is certainly an objection outweighing such a probability, that the word *עַלְמָה* (*ālmāh*) is elsewhere found in the Bible with one uniform signification—a woman that has not known man. It occurs in the following places:—Gen. 24: 43, Ex. 2: 8, Ps. 68: 25, Song of Sol. 1: 3, and 6: 8, Prov. 30: 19, besides Is. 7: 14. An exception

has indeed been made to Prov. 30: 19, but founded on a misapprehension of the passage. The phrase translated "the way of a man with a maid," alludes either to the arts of the base seducer, or to generation and conception, as David has expressed it in Ps. 139: 14, 15,—“I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth.” Either of these interpretations is perfectly consistent with rendering *almah* according to its undisputed signification in every other passage in the Old Testament, except Is. 7: 14.

Now as the word occurs in six places with one appropriate meaning, then the other and only place where it occurs must have the same meaning, unless the "*ratio loci*" the exigency of the passage, demands a different. It is not enough to show that it *may* mean something else; for this would bring a flood of conjectures on the plainest passages of Scripture. Nor is it enough to show that the corresponding noun in the cognate Arabic and Syriac, is used in a less restricted manner than is claimed for it in the passage under consideration. For the difference between dialects of a language common in its origin, often appears in the different use and applications of particular words; and even in the Syriac and Arabic, the earlier signification of *almah* might have been such as it is in the Hebrew Scriptures, but become changed at a later period.

Does then the '*ratio loci*,' the exigency of the passage, DEMAND a rendering of the word in Is. 7: 14, different from its signification elsewhere in the Scriptures? This is the question on which the whole is hinged.

Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, had formed an alliance, and were on their march to Jerusalem. Tidings of their approach came to Ahaz, king of Judah, whose court was in Jerusalem. He and his people were thrown into the utmost consternation. "His heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind."

"Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field; [at the termination of the canal by which water was drawn from the fountain Siloam, and became the upper pool, made use of to cleanse cloths, and situated near the public road,

that passed through the field where the fuller pursued his employment: probably Ahaz had gone there, to have works of public defence constructed;] and say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted, for the two tails of these smoking fire-brands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal: [destroy its government, reduce it to the condition of a tributary, and place over it a king of our own choosing, the son of some ignoble person:] thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin: and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people. And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son." [These two provinces shall not add Judah and Jerusalem to themselves; they shall not enlarge their own boundaries of empire.] The prophet is directed to conclude his message with the monitory words, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established."

Thus ended the first communication. The prophet waited to see the effect of his message. After an interval, perhaps on the same day, and perhaps not until a day or two after, the alarm still continuing, and Ahaz (whom doubtless the people imitated) still distrusting God's word, "the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the Lord, thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. [Make any request, however great; ask for any miracle, however stupendous.] But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. [A seemingly pious, but hypocritical reply, revealing his unwillingness to rely on God, and his disposition to get to himself the glory of successful defence.] And he said, [i. e. the prophet,] Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? [Both his own patience, as well as the patience of God, was provoked.] Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold," &c.

Now if the person denoted by the word *almah* was the youthful bride of Ahaz, or the wife of the prophet, or any

other young woman, married or unmarried, but not a virgin, what a specimen of anti-climax does it make of the passage! When the prophet had called their attention by the exclamation, "BEHOLD!" when he had said, "The Lord himself shall give you a sign;" when, after the first proposal of an *extraordinary* sign, he uses language calculated to awaken expectation of one yet *more* extraordinary; when all this is done, surely to point to a child conceived and born like all other children in the world, is a woful descent. It is a *bathos*, such as the prophet could hardly have meant, when he said, "Ask it in the *depth*." "Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus." The drift of the passage is utterly against such a hypothesis. To put, then, a signification on the word *almah*, against the *usus loquendi* of the Bible, and against what the passage *demand*s, is contrary to the first principles of interpretation.

II. Another hypothesis, noticed in the introduction, is, that a miraculous child is promised, who should be born of a virgin during Ahaz' reign, in the course of two or three years, and was to be *symbolical* of the child Jesus. This is maintained by an eminent interpreter in this country.*

An objection to this is, that no such miracle is recorded. One like it was never known before in the history of the nation, but yet others of inferior note are faithfully recorded. The account of the invasion alluded to in this chapter, is very minutely given in the historical books; but this miracle, if it then took place, is omitted. The historian, who might have been Isaiah himself, is wholly silent, and not even Josephus has a hint about it. Doubtless many events have had no place given them in history, which were yet very remarkable. But do not the circumstances above mentioned make it quite improbable that this, if it had occurred, would not have been mentioned? The reason is therefore against its occurrence.

Another objection is, that it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to make the Jews feel assured of the miraculous conception of the child, and therefore, to them, it would have been no sign at all. No such accompanying events are related to have taken place, as attended the conception and birth of Jesus of the virgin Mary. As such a thing was never before heard of, must not the Jews, before they could

*Stuart on the Hebrews, 2d ed., page 571.

believe the child to be miraculous, have waited until they beheld their deliverance with their own eyes? A deliverance was needed to make them believe the prediction of the prophet, respecting the virgin and her child. They had only the prophet's word for it. And what little regard they had for that, is manifest not only in this, but in all his prophecies. How, then, could a miraculous child, born before the expiration of three years, have been a *sign*, unless this was confirmed by *other previous and accompanying signs*, of which we ought to have some account, but concerning which there is a total silence?

But it is asked not only by the defenders of the hypothesis we are now considering, but by those who put the unrestricted meaning on *almah*, "How could the birth of Jesus, which happened 742 years afterward, be a *sign* to Ahaz, that *within three years* his kingdom was to be freed from his enemies?" To say the least, those who ask the question do not dispose of the difficulty by the hypothesis they have constructed. For as we have seen, the first has but the lowest probability, if any, in its support, and cannot be admitted on the principles of just interpretation. The other is no sign at all, because it needs another to make it credible.

It may be further replied, that if the sign was for confirmation to the Jews, in respect to deliverance from their enemies, then it could have made no difference whether 3 years, or 740 elapsed, before the sign predicted should appear. They were in imminent danger; they were in almost momentary expectation of the enemy; they were in the greatest alarm. Under such circumstances, how much assurance could that unbelieving people feel of speedy deliverance, by being told they should behold a sign of it *within some three years*?

I shall however attempt to show that the sign was not for confirmation; that it was not "a sign to Ahaz that his kingdom was to be delivered from his enemies." If this attempt shall be successful, then the hypothesis whether of the *symbolical* interpretation, or of that which wholly excludes Christ, cannot stand; for each rests on the basis of a *sign for confirmation*. Then also the great objection to the entire and sole reference of the prophecy to Jesus Christ will be removed quite out of the way.

(1) There are two distinct addresses in this chapter, delivered probably at two distinct times; the first, in verses 1—9; the second, from verse 10, to end of the chapter. This is evident from the language of verse 10—"Moreover the Lord spake AGAIN," &c. Although *to confirm* was the prophet's object in his first address, verses 1—9, it might have been altogether different in his second. At least, there is no incongruity in supposing that it was different. He had waited long enough to see the result of his first message. Ahaz would not comply with his proposal. Surely God would not *force* confirmation on him, whether he were willing to receive it or not. With the perverse, God shows himself perverse; and with the froward, froward. The very conclusion of the first address, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established," was premonitory not of confirmation, should he still manifest unbelief, but of threatening and alarm.

The notion of confirmation is derived from the misinterpretation of verses 1—16, as uttered all at once, and the rest of the chapter as separate. But such, we have seen, is not the fact.

(2) The prophet, having ascertained the continued unbelief of Ahaz, thus introduces what he had, in that event, to say—"Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?" Who would be prepared for *confirmation*, by such an introduction?

(3) The whole address is direct to Ahaz and his court, "Hear now, O house of David!" This allows no room for the supposition that the sign was to confirm the *pious* portion of the people. Vitrina says it was, "*certos facere pios de praesente dei liberatione.*" But this is gratuitous, and against the face of the passage.

(4) There is no particle of transition between verses 16 and 17.

(5) What follows verses 14—16, commencing immediately with verse 17, wears the most severe aspect of *rebuke*, and is calculated to fill the mind with fearful expectation of future judgements. What *confirmation* could have been given in verses 14—16, when in the very same address, and, in immediate connection, such woes were denounced? What *comfort* could even pious Jews have had in prospect

of the present deliverance of their country, when its cultivated fields and vineyards were so soon to be given up to desolation?

(6) The question quoted above, "How could the birth of Jesus, which happened 742 years afterward, be a *sign* to Ahaz, that *within three years* his kingdom was to be freed from his enemies?" implies what the passage does not contain. The sign was not to confirm the people in the belief that *their own land* was to be delivered. Verse 16th does not so read. It is not, Thy land, the kingdom of Judah, shall be delivered; but, "*The land, whose two kings thou dost dread, shall become desolate.*" The prophet predicts the destruction of Syria and Israel. He does not mention Judah, except when he denounces ruin on that also, in the subsequent part of the chapter. What assurance, then, could the Jews have of such a deliverance as the sign is said to confirm, *when no such deliverance is promised?* Did the prophet intend, that they should derive comfort from inference merely? For their country could not indeed be disturbed by Israel and Syria, after the power of these two confederate nations should be broken. But if the *sign* had been for *confirmation*, would he thus have spoken so indirectly? Even in that case, their only comfort would have been that of being assured of their enemies' overthrow, along with their own.

Moreover, according to those who reject the direct Messianic interpretation, the prophet spoke of a period of some *three years*, within which the sign was to be given. And the enemy were so nigh, that Jerusalem was filled with the greatest alarm. What assurance, then, is there that the enemy would not effect their object of taking Jerusalem within the appointed period, and before their power should be broken? For, let it be observed, the *prophet does not even allude to the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem from the present invasion.* The prophecy thus reads, after the sign is mentioned—"The land, whose two kings thou dost dread, shall become desolate. The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah"—and thus on, to the end of the chapter. What room is there here, for the notion of a *sign* for *confirmation*? Plainly, none. The hypothesis, therefore, which makes the child only an ordinary child, or that which makes

it a miraculous child, born not many years after the sign was predicted, cannot stand. For the basis on which it rests, that of a sign for *confirmation*, cannot stand. The great difficulty thrown in the way of the entire and sole interpretation of the prophecy, as fulfilled in the birth of Jesus of the virgin Mary, is removed.

It will be observed that, in the discussion of this passage, no argument has been drawn from the application of the prophecy by Matthew, in his Gospel, 1: 22, 23. And for the obvious reason, that the meaning of a passage must be ascertained as it stands in the Old Testament, before it can be decided *how* any one of the writers of the New Testament applies it. Matthew, in 2: 15, says, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, Out of Egypt have I called my son." But most manifestly this last passage was not intended to be *prophetical* of Christ. So also the mere fact that Matthew quotes Is. 7: 14 as he does, is no proof, of itself, that the original passage was directly or indirectly *prophetical* of Christ.

III. We shall now attempt to establish the first of the three methods of interpretation mentioned in the commencement of this article:—that of referring the passage directly and exclusively to the child Jesus. The following is our general view of the passage:—*The Messiah's birth is predicted, and constituted a period of the nature of a sign, within which God would execute judgements on Syria and Israel, and on Judah.* This idea will be developed in an exegesis of verses 14—16.

EXEGESIS.

Verse 14. "*Wherefore*" &c. i. e. "As you yourself will not ask a sign, therefore the Lord himself, unasked, shall give you one. An extraordinary sign would have appeared, had it been requested. But this shall not now be given; and another sign shall be appointed. The Lord shall take the matter into his own hands." It is by no means evident that a *real sign* was to be exhibited; but the idea is, that the Lord's arm would be made bare, in some signal manner.

"A *sign*." In the ordinary use of this word it denotes an event which precedes the thing signified. But here, it seems to partake of *paranomasia*. It may indeed be no where else so used; but the figure which justifies it is of very fre-

quent occurrence in the Bible, especially in Isaiah. [See Stuart's Hebrew Grammar, 4th ed., § 571. (e), and Commentary on Hebrews, pp. 470, 471, 2nd ed.] I cannot express myself here better than in the language of Professor Stuart on Heb. 10: 20—"Although I would not admit paranomasia, except in cases where there are urgent reasons for it, it seems to be more tolerable here, than the other method of interpretation suggested above, and is certainly in harmony with the *principles* of the *usus loquendi* of the sacred writers."

The idea is familiarly this: The prophet says to Ahaz, "You will not ask a sign; God shall therefore give you one with a witness." The question to be settled, is, does the context *demand* such an interpretation? It has been made evident, I trust, that the idea of "a sign for *confirmation*" does not come up, at all, to the spirit of the passage; that a child then born, whether miraculous or not, could not have been meant by the prophet. Under the circumstances of the case, what other interpretation fulfils the "*ratio loci*," except that the prophet appoints the Messiah's birth a *period*, of the *nature* of a sign, within which, not only Israel and Syria, but Judah also, should be given up to desolation? As the figure *paranomasia* justifies the use of the word *sign* in a sense different from its ordinary acceptance, different even from its use in the same address and in the same verse; as other methods of interpretation are beset with insuperable difficulties, but this will be perfectly free, then there is sufficient reason why it should be adopted.

The use of the word "*sign*" may, however, be considered as approximating to its signification in Exodus 3: 12, and Isaiah 37: 30. In the former, Moses' divine mission was to be confirmed by this *sign*, or *proof*;—that the Israelites should worship God in Mount Horeb. In the latter passage, a sign was given to Hezekiah for the purpose of confirming him in the belief that God would frustrate the attempts of the Assyrian king:—In the second year after raising the siege, the people should be supported by the spontaneous produce of the land, and in the third year, they should sow and reap. These events were designed as proofs that it was God who commissioned Moses, and who drove away the Assyrian. So also the birth of Jesus of a virgin, in the fulness of time, was to be a proof to the house

of Judah, that it was God, and not man, who brought upon them their miseries on account of their sins.

That the word "*sign*" is not here to be taken in its ordinary acceptation, may be further argued from the fact, that in chapter 8, verses 1—4, a proper sign is given for the overthrow of the allied nations that were proceeding against Jerusalem. "Moreover the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz. And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. And I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bare a son. Then said the Lord unto me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria."

The reader will here notice the fact, that neither in this place is *the deliverance of the land of Judah* mentioned as the event which the sign is to confirm, but the overthrow of Syria and Israel. And immediately following, in verses 5—8, as in verses 17—25 of the preceding chapter, *the desolation of Judah* is denounced. "Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son, now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck." Now why *two* signs should be given of just the same kind, (according to the hypothesis of a child conceived and born in the ordinary manner,) one after the other; or why, (on the hypothesis of a miraculous child,) after a *greater* sign had been predicted, a *lesser* sign should be given, to assure them of precisely the same thing, it certainly must be difficult to find a satisfactory reason. Certainly the interpretation which leads to this difficulty, ought to be avoided, if it can be. The interpretation of the word "*sign*" in 7: 14, as affected by the figure *paranomasia*, enables us to avoid it. The prophet is made to give not the same, but two *distinct* thoughts in 7: 14—16, and in 8: 1—4. Can there be a doubt, then, which interpretation is to be preferred? Nay, can

there be a doubt, which interpretation is *demanded*, alike by the scope of the address in 7: 14—25, and by events recorded in 8: 1—8?

"*Behold.*"—The attention of the people is called to something extraordinary. How inconsistent as well with the style and drift of the passage, as with the *usus loquendi*, the supposition is that the prophet points to a child born in the ordinary course of nature, has already been remarked, and need not now be repeated.

"*The virgin.*"—For this word, see the introductory discussion. In our English version, it is translated not *the virgin*, but "*a virgin.*" The original Hebrew has the definite article. Prof. Stuart, in his Grammar, remarks, "We can hardly believe the Hebrew article to have been employed, in cases where to the mind of the writer the object was wholly indefinite." From considerations already adduced, we infer that the prophet had in mind the virgin Mary, of whom Jesus was born. There is certainly but one alternative to be taken. Either he meant the maid already married, or to be married; or he meant literally the virgin from whom a miraculous child was to spring within the period of three years; or he meant the mother of Jesus. Neither of the first two can be admitted, for reasons already stated. The prophet must, therefore, have meant the last. And to her only, is it consistent to refer the word.

"*And calleth his name Immanuel.*"—Mothers often gave names to their sons. See 1 Sam. 1: 20.

"*Immanuel*"—"God with us," as interpreted in Matt. 1: 23. Christ has many names corresponding with his character, attributes, office, &c. The title Immanuel may not of itself prove his divinity. But the New Testament leaves us in no doubt how to understand it. "And the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." "God was manifest in the flesh."

The word "Immanuel" occurs also in Is. 8: 8, 10. It has been said by those who do not admit the direct Messianic interpretation, that the child born in the prophet's time is here "twice referred to as if then present, or at least then living." It might as well be argued that because it is written, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," it is a son already existing in the prophet's time. The proper question is, on the supposition that Immanuel in 7: 14, is

Christ, can he be referred to as he is in 8: 8, 10? Surely it need not be here said, that again and again does the prophet speak of things as at the very door, which nevertheless did not occur till the birth of Christ and afterward. From temporal things about to take place immediately, he passes to spiritual things under the gospel dispensation, by the most rapid transitions. To repeat instances would be to quote from almost every chapter. Even in the very same address, in which 8: 8, 10 occur, there is most undeniable reference to the kingdom of Christ. "Nevertheless the dimness" &c.—see 9: 1—7. If then it be made out (and we think it has been) by the requisite proofs, that in 7: 14, the word Immanuel refers to Christ alone, then there is no forced construction put on 8: 8, 10, by referring to Christ alone there.

There is a passage in Micah, a prophet who preceded Isaiah in point of time, which shows that in Is. 8: 8, the prophet might well use the phrase, "thy land, O Immanuel." Micah thus speaks in ch. 5: 2—"But thou, Bethlehem Ephraatah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be *Ruler in Israel*." The land might therefore well be called Immanuel's.

It at least seems strange, that the prophet, if Immanuel was then born, should so soon predict that the Assyrians, like an overflowing, desolating flood, would afterward fill the very land, of whose deliverance from Syria and Israel, only a short time before, this birth had been made the sign.

In regard to 8: 10, where our English version has the phrase "*for God is with us*," it is thought, (and with the greatest probability,) that the form of the original Hebrew is obscured, and that the figure *paranomasia* is used by the prophet. But then it by no means follows, that the individual bearing the name must have been present. Those who assert it, yet say, "that the prophecy in Isaiah, (which begins with the 8th chapter and ends with chapter 9: 7), contains, at the close of it, most indubitable proof that the birth of the Messiah, and the "coming of his kingdom" were, on this occasion, distinctly before the mind of the prophet; see Is. 9: 1—7."* Why then may not the prophet triumphantly appeal to the Messiah as the great pledge of the deliverance

* Stuart on Hebrews, 2d ed. pp. 573, 574.

of the people from all their enemies? Observe how he expresses himself in verses 4, 6, of the 9th chapter: "For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." How perfectly this corresponds with 8: 9, 10. "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces, and give ear all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for IMMANUEL!" The prophet looks through all their oppressions—their present invasion—the attack of the Assyrian—their captivity—he looks through all, and by a bold figure of *paranomasia*, exultingly proclaims the watch-word "IMMANUEL," as God's pledge that he will not utterly forsake, but will save his people. Need it be asked, then, *can* 8: 10, as well as 8: 8, be applied to Jesus? Does not the exigency of the passage demand it? To take the word and apply it to a child then living—does it not make the verse "like a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint?" There is therefore nothing in 7: 14, nothing in 8: 8, 10, which forbids the direct and sole reference of Immanuel to Jesus Christ; but, on the other hand, there is much that forbids the reference of it to any other. Difficulties meet us, on every quarter, as we attempt to divert the prophecy, whether directly or indirectly, away from the Messiah; but many aids come to conduct us to him "who was born in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Verse 15.—"*Butter and honey shall he eat.*"—"The Hebrew word usually rendered *butter*, denotes rather *cream*, or more properly *sour*, or *curdled milk*." [Robinson's Calmet, p. 216, where see a full account of the word.] It is supposed that the prophet alludes to the common food of young children. But is not the interpretation of the phrase pointed out in verse 22, below?—"Butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land." The prophet intimates that the child shall be born and nourished when the land of his birth shall be in the desolate condition described in verses 17—25 of this same chapter. How well does this accord with facts! When Christ came, Judah had been long laid waste. Her vineyards and her olive-groves, her gardens and cultivated fields, were all fallen a prey to the destroyer. In the

figurative language of the prophet, in the verses below, not merely applicable to the captivity, but descriptive of their history down to the advent of the Messiah, so ruined should be their agriculture, that one cow and two sheep would find such luxuriant pasturage as to afford abundance of milk to the impoverished inhabitants, and the bees would fill the forsaken hills with wild honey, on which the scattered remnant should subsist. In places once under the highest cultivation, cattle would find free range; men should hunt with their bows and arrows; while some parts should be so overgrown with briars and thorns as not to be penetrated.

"*Until he shall know how,*" &c. Our English version has, "*that he may know.*" The Hebrew allows the rendering "*Until,*" and the context both permits and demands it. The prophet seems to employ a proverb in common use. His language cannot *decide* the contested point, as to when moral agency commences; when one can be called, and is, a sinner. For the Saviour says of the Jews, "If I had not come unto them, they had not known sin." Surely he did not mean that they were literally without sin, before he came. Nor is it certain that Isaiah's language is to be understood literally, but only comparatively. And if, especially, he only uses a common proverb, much less can we quote him to *decide* the question when man can be called, and is regarded, a sinner. That must be determined by other considerations. It is the design of the prophet merely to give *dress* to his thoughts; he uses language adapted to excite interest in those whom he addressed.

Verse 16. "*For before,*" &c.—Before Christ should begin his public ministry, and during the interval between that period and the time when the prediction was uttered.

"*The land shall be desolate, of whose two kings thou dost stand in dread.*" Such is the rendering which the Hebrew demands, instead of that given in our version. In neither, however, is the deliverance of the land of Judah mentioned. "Desolate;"—i. e. forsaken of its inhabitants. In 6: 12, the prophet says of Judah, "And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a *great forsaking* in the midst of the land." Thus is it declared, in 7: 16, concerning Syria and Israel.

"*Thou dost dread.*"—The same word is used in Ex. 1: 12, where the Egyptians are represented as being grieved at the increase of the Israelites; and in Num. 22: 3, where

Moab is distressed at their approach, on their way to the promised land.

Verses 17—25, contain, in the same address, a denunciation against Judah.

Thus does the prophet predict the Messiah's birth, as a period, between which and the time of uttering the prophecy, Israel and Judah were to be given up to desolation. Thus might he afford encouragement to the pious through successive generations, in the midst of their calamities, that a deliverer should come; that the "Ruler in Israel," "Immanuel," should at length appear; that "a horn of salvation should be raised up," and "that he would grant unto them that they being delivered from all their enemies, and from the hand of those who hated them, might serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life." Thus might the prophet have presented a motive even to the rebellious, to turn from their rebellion. And thus, by predicting the circumstances of the Messiah's birth, so as to single him out from every child under heaven, has he afforded both Jew and Gentile infallible guidance to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

It will be a confirmation of this interpretation of the passage, if the general idea can be found in any other prophet. Such an idea is contained in Micah 5: 2. (Compare Matt. 2: 5, 6.) Having predicted the birth-place of the Messiah, "the Ruler of Israel, whose goings forth have been of old," he immediately adds, "*Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travaileth shall have brought forth.*"

"In the fullness of time," Jesus Christ came, not indeed a temporal, but spiritual deliverer; whose kingdom was shadowed forth by temporal imagery, leading even his disciples to expect at first the *literal* fulfilment of the prophets, but was not of this world. Not all received him. Judah and Israel therefore continued desolate, and have continued desolate, down to this day. But "God hath not cast away his people, whom he foreknew. Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

ART. V. REVIEW OF DWIGHT'S HEBREW WIFE.

By REV. WM. MARSHALL, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Peckskill,
New-York.

The Hebrew Wife: or the Law of Marriage in relation to the Lawfulness of Polygamy, and the extent of the law of Incest. By S. E. Dwight, New-York: Leavitt, Lord, & Co., 180 Broadway: Boston, Crocker & Brewster. 1836, pp. 190.

THIS volume, from the pen of Mr. Dwight, is a work of considerable learning and research, and was no doubt, prepared with the benevolent intention of promoting the cause of religion and virtue. The limits to which this article must necessarily be confined, and the probable extent of the argument which it must contain, require us to advance without preliminary remarks, directly to the subject in hand.

The subject of polygamy occupies the first fifty pages of the work under review. It is scarcely necessary to say, that this practice is one of the most flagrant transgressions of God's original institution of marriage. From the fact that he created at first only one man and one woman, and in all succeeding ages has kept the sexes nearly equal in number, it is certain that polygamy has always been contrary to his creative and providential arrangements. There is much in the Old Testament from which the evil of the practice ought to have been inferred; but we do not agree with the author when he affirms, that the Old Testament contains an express prohibition of it. If we are not greatly mistaken, the *supposed necessity* for such a prohibition has led the author to believe that it really exists, and that he has found it in the laws of Moses. He will scarcely deny that the church of God existed without an express prohibition of polygamy for the space of about two thousand and five hundred years. There is a passage in the book of Malachi (2: 14, 15,) which, though it scarcely amounts to an express prohibition of the very objectionable practice, and probably was not so understood by the church in his days, comes much nearer to such a restraining act than any

thing contained in the Pentateuch. Even under the Christian dispensation, we have not express and positive divine law on every point of duty; or whence the diversity of opinion among good men on the wine question, the slave question, and others? Much is left to be inferred from general principles revealed in Providence and in the Holy Scriptures?

Mr. Dwight discusses the subject of polygamy by answering the two following questions: 1st, Was polygamy lawful to the patriarchs? 2d, Was it lawful under the Levitical code? That it was always sinful we grant, and that the sinfulness of it would always have been obvious had it not been for that selfishness which beclouds, in some degree, the understanding even of the good; and yet it seems to us that, in comparing it with other sins, the author is not free from exaggeration. He confidently affirms, that polygamy was the prevailing sin of the antediluvians, and the cause of the deluge. All the proof he gives of this is contained in the account of Lamech and his wives, and in the following text: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all whom they chose." The case of Lamech may be passed over as being only an individual case of this sin, and accompanied in Scripture (even if Mr. Dwight's comment on his words be correct) with nothing more than that antediluvian's own conviction of the comparative evil of his sin. The author's explanation of the text we have quoted, requires a little more explanation. First, we object to his interpretation, because it does not account for the uncommon phraseology, "*the sons of God and the daughters of men.*" The men have here the far more honourable designation; and yet, in ninety-nine cases of polygamy out of a hundred, the men were the *guilty*, and the women the *injured* parties. This suggests the interpretation given by all the commentators whom we have consulted, viz., "that by *the sons of God* we are to understand men of piety, or at least of a religious profession; and by *the daughters of men*, those young females who were destitute of religion. The marriages of these very unequal parties produced, it would seem, the general corruption of manners which led to the world's destruction. In all such cases, there is far more probability that the superiour party will sink, than that the inferiour party will rise. Such matches, in the very great majority of instances, are like

that of the pure and polluted stream, where the river composed of both must be impure.

Our second objection to the author's theory is, that polygamy never can be the sin of more than about one fourth of the adult population, that is, about one half of the adult male population; since, if they are polygamists, they leave no wives for the rest. Can it be supposed that ever a half of the adult male population, or any considerable number of them, would submit to involuntary celibacy, that their neighbours might be polygamists; or that one woman in a hundred could be found who would willingly be a wife of a polygamist or even of a bigamist, when she might have a husband to herself alone. It is only a few men of wealth and power, that can be guilty of keeping a plurality of wives.

Our third objection to the author's theory is, that the early postdiluvians, instructed by Noah and his immediate descendants, must have known if polygamy had been the procuring cause of the flood, and at least the pious among them would have avoided it, which we find was not the fact. There is great probability in the opinion, that in the Old World, where death was a comparatively rare occurrence, atheism greatly prevailed, and that after the flood men ran to the opposite extreme and worshipped a plurality of gods—a sin never charged against the antediluvians. It is certain that God would not destroy the world by the flood for a sin which was the crime of only a few. The deluge must have been sent for wickedness in which the people were generally involved, and not for a sin which, from the nature of the case, must have been so rare as polygamy.

The author next proceeds to show, that polygamy was unlawful under the Levitical code. There are three passages in the Old Testament which have been adduced as containing a direct or implied permission of the practice. The arguments brought from these he has completely overthrown. His translation of Lev. 18: 18, with his defence of it, we consider as a failure. The common translation is, "Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister to vex her in her life time." Mr. Dwight's translation is, "Thou shalt not take one wife to another," &c., which would amount to a direct prohibition of polygamy. Commentators have noticed this translation long ago; but none of them that we have seen, approve of it. "Some think," says Scott, "that this verse contains an express prohibition of polygamy; sup-

posing the word *sister* merely to signify a wife, whom the person spoken of had already married. But though the Mosaic law contains no explicit allowance of polygamy, yet there is no other passage which favours the interpretation of this text as a direct law against it, and many things in the whole subsequent history, imply a connivance at it." That the Hebrew phrases which, literally rendered, would read, a "man to his brother," and "a wife to her sister," are *generally* used idiomatically, and signify one man to another, and one woman to another, is certain; but this is no reason why they may never be used in the literal sense, when the connection requires it. If the Hebrew phrase *אִשָּׁה אֶל אֶחָיו* as Mr. Dwight affirms, should never be translated *a wife to her sister*; we will just suppose that he were required to translate this English phrase into Hebrew, and we beg leave to ask him, whether he would not consider the words *אִשָּׁה אֶל אֶחָיו* a good Hebrew translation, or what else he would prefer?

It will not be supposed that the English words *a wife to her sister*, contain an idea which the Hebrews had not words to express. But according to Mr. Dwight, they could not express it by the words *אִשָּׁה אֶל אֶחָיו* because they used these words idiomatically to express another idea. We think that a word or phrase that is frequently used idiomatically, may on other occasions be used in its literal sense. If it were not so, the introduction of an idiom into any language would divest that language of the power to express, except by circumlocution, the idea of which the words now used idiomatically had once been the literal expression. If we can properly translate the words, "one wife to another," and the words, "a wife to her sister," into the same Hebrew phrase, it is obvious that, with equal propriety, we may translate that phrase back into either of the English ones, though not without respect to the context. In our own language we use the word *sister*, figuratively, to signify a female; but we still retain our right to use it, when necessary, in the literal sense; and so with the word *brother*.

Another strong objection to Mr. Dwight's translation of this verse arises from the fact, noticed by Scott in his commentary, that the whole subsequent history of the Old Testament saints implies a connivance at polygamy. We have been accustomed to think that polygamy, in the case of a Christian, if such a thing could ever occur, would be much

more aggravated than it was in the case of Elkanah, the father of Samuel; in David, the man according to God's own heart, and others; and that it would be so because Christians possess a clearer revelation. But if Mr. Dwight's translation were correct, and if the pious Jews had understood the text as he understands it, they had quite as clear a revelation against polygamy as we have now. There is nothing in the New Testament more explicit against polygamy than this verse, if he translates it correctly. We are taking it for granted that the respectable, learned, and pious among the ancient Jews, understood the idiom of the Hebrew language, as well as any of our modern Hebraists understand it. David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, had eight wives; but if he had understood the verse under consideration as an express prohibition of polygamy, as he would have understood it if it had been so, he surely would not have lived in that sin. And, let it be remembered, that polygamy was with him a course of life, not a sin inadvertently fallen into, soon repented of, and forsaken. It is worthy of remark, that neither in David's penitential psalms, nor in the history of his life, do we find any expression of contrition for that sin. This certainly would not be the case had he committed it against an express prohibition which he distinctly understood.

Mr. Dwight affirms that in the practice of polygamy, David must have sinned against an express law, because the king of Israel was forbidden to *multiply wives*, and because to have more than one was to *multiply* them. Surely the author of the fifty-first Psalm was not the man who would continue sinning to the end of his days against a law so express and plain as these would be, according to Mr. Dwight's interpretation. No doubt he understood Leviticus 18: 18 to be, just what Commentators think it now, a prohibition to have two sisters in marriage at the same time; and the command not to *multiply wives* as a prohibition to keep a seraglio, like other Asiatic monarchs. In this view of these prohibitions, the man according to God's own heart never transgressed them. The king of Israel was forbidden to *multiply horses*; yet the author does not seem to think, that he might not have more than one of them. Yet if he might lawfully have two, what becomes of the author's argument from this passage? We believe it was right for the king of Israel to have two or more horses, and wrong

for him to have two wives; but the evidence against the latter practice must be sought for in something else, than the prohibition to *multiply wives*.

The author in his strict construction of the word *multiply* is misled by a principle of interpretation which runs through a considerable part of his volume, which is, that the prohibition of a vice in the extreme, would be an implied sanction of it in all the inferior degrees. Upon this principle, an act against murder, would be an implied sanction of assault and battery. The author seems to fear, that to interpret the words in question as forbidding the king to have a considerable number of wives, is to interpret them as allowing him to have two or three. Upon this implicative plan of interpretation, a precept forbidding the *king only* to multiply wives, would imply that any of his subjects might take as many as they pleased.

Our view of the whole matter is, that all polygamists, from the beginning of the world, were, in that matter, transgressors; but that such of them as lived before the Christian era did not sin against an express law. There is a passage in the book of Malachi against polygamy, and which expressly forbids a man to deal deceitfully against the wife of his youth, and put her away; but the man who increased the number of his wives without divorcing any, might not perceive that passage to be applicable to his case. It is true that the prophet mentions the creation of only one man and one woman at first. An excellent argument may be drawn from that fact; yet it is still different from an express prohibition of the practice of polygamy.

We have several reasons for debating this subject so long with Mr. Dwight. First, we consider some of his principles of biblical interpretation unsound and capable of being turned to a bad account on other theological questions. Secondly, we desire to protect the memory of the saints under the Old Testament dispensation from a load of infamy. Lastly, we desire to convince the licentious in modern days, that they may not plead the example of Old Testament saints, since the sins committed by them as sins of ignorance, cannot be committed now but as wilful transgressions. We need not stop to prove that the New Testament has set the sinfulness of polygamy in so clear a light, that any who commit it now, must be wilful and flagrant offenders.

In the second part of the volume, the subject of incestuous marriage is discussed at great length. *Incest*, as usually defined, is "the unnatural and criminal conjunction of persons within degrees prohibited." Out of this definition naturally arise the questions; *who has a right to issue prohibitions*, and *what are the prohibited degrees?* The church of Rome, in this as in other things, claims a right to legislate, not in virtue of written revelation on the subject, but in virtue of her supposed endowment with infallibility. Under this arrogated right she forbids a man to marry his fourth cousin, or any more nearly related. Some Protestant churches, following the church of Rome at a humble distance, forbid marriages of cousins; others of them declare, that a man may not marry any of his own relations nearer than cousins, nor any of his deceased wife's, nearer than cousins to her. Others say, that he may not marry within the degrees of consanguinity forbidden in the Word, nor any of his wife's relations nearer than he might of his own. Mohammedans and some Pagan nations forbid marriage with a sister in law: hence Mr. Dwight remarks, (doubtless intending a severe reflection on our rulers,) "that Mohammedan and Pagan Rome forbid marriages which are allowed by the State of New-York." Let us speak softly of our rulers: they are not under obligations to follow the example of such people, any farther than it is right. If forbidding to marry is the test of purity with Mr. Dwight, he will find that the church of Rome stands conspicuous in this respect, both in prophecy and in history.

Mr. Dwight maintains, that if marriage among relations were lawful, fornication among them could be no worse than among others, and that if worse among them, (as it is allowed to be,) it follows as a fair inference, that their intermarriages are unlawful. The principle is, that among all those with whom marriage is lawful, fornication cannot be worse with one than with another. We maintain, that the crime just mentioned is capable of aggravations of indefinite variety and extent, even where there is neither consanguinity nor affinity. It would be an aggravation of murder, that the person slain was related by consanguinity or affinity to him who took his life: the same circumstances will be an aggravation of the sin of impurity, independently of any law respecting marriage.

According to those who treat on the subject of incest, it

divides itself into two branches, incestuous fornication, and incestuous marriage. It is to the last branch of the subject that Mr. Dwight has turned our attention by this volume. According to his theory the co-relatives who ought not to intermarry are sixty-six—thirty-three of each sex. There are sixty-two in his list respecting whom, so far as we know, there is no controversy in any of our churches. The marriages called incestuous with which the churches have trouble are but two,—the marriage of a brother and sister in law, and the marriage of a man to his wife's niece. The chief difficulty has been with the first. The incest question, as relating to these two cases, is one which for many years has perplexed the churches in the United States. We have on our table a New-York publication dated 1797, which complains, just as we do now, of the unsettled state of this question. That has been followed by a succession of publications up to the present time. In the year 1827, the American press teemed with pamphlets and articles in periodical works on this long agitated question. In 1834, the Synod of New-York had before them the case of a female who had been kept back from sealing ordinances for marrying the widower of her deceased aunt, and whom the Synod, by a vote lacking but one of unanimity, ordered to be restored to the fellowship of the church. The speech delivered on that occasion by her agent has been published.

In the fall of 1835 the Synod of Kentucky had before them a Reverend Brother who had married the sister of his deceased wife. In 1836 the public received this volume from the Rev. S. E. Dwight, late President of Hamilton College, New York, and son of the late President Dwight of Yale College. As the author, before he entered on the duties of the clerical office, was a practitioner at the bar, and conducted a prosecution for the crime of incest, the readers of his book expect to see the united light of legal and theological research illuminating all the intricacies of this question. The result of his inquiries is, *that for a man to marry any of his own relations nearer than a cousin, or any of his deceased wife's relations nearer than he might of his own, is incest; and ought to be made punishable both by civil and ecclesiastical law.* Respecting the particular civil penalties, he is not explicit. Whether all cases of incest should be punished alike? whether in the case of any such marriage the parties should be sent to the State prison? and if so,

whether they may be allowed to live together after their release, provided that their imprisonment is not for life? are questions to which he gives no answer. His rule probably is, that "where one penalty fails to prevent the crime, a severer one must be resorted to, until the grand object of the law is obtained." It can scarcely be pleaded in excuse for leaving this matter so incomplete, that he thought the subject of penalties might safely be left to the wisdom and virtue of our legislators: for he endeavours to show, that they have not proved themselves worthy of our confidence on this subject. In respect to ecclesiastical procedure, he is explicit, and teaches plainly, that laws should be made to expel from the church all who may henceforth contract those marriages which he calls incestuous. In page 180, he uses the following words: "We call then distinctly on the great ecclesiastical bodies of our country, by their solemn decisions, to condemn those incestuous marriages; on the ministers of religion, to bear their public and decided testimony against them; on the churches of all denominations to put away this iniquity from among them; and on the legislatures of the several States to restore our American statute books to their pristine purity." Speaking of the incestuous marriages already contracted, he suggests, that seeing the church and the States have all neglected their duty, it may be best for those bodies not to act against a crime hitherto committed by their connivance; but the married persons, according to his view of the matter, are bound to separate. He sends them to learn their duty, if they can, from Ezra, who caused the Jewish men to put away their heathen wives, whom (be it recollected) they had married against a direct law of Jehovah. The author regards the man who marries the sister or niece of his former wife as guilty of a far greater crime, than the Jew was guilty of who married a Pagan. In page 186, when complaining that churches should abstain, through fear of consequences, from denouncing incest and making strict laws against it, he asks, "Did Ezra do thus, in a case of far less enormity, to the Jews his countrymen, on their return from Babylon?" The sin, which he asserts was of far less enormity than this alleged incest, was the sin of intermarrying with the heathen, which, as no man who meant to keep aloof from heathen practices would be guilty of it, must imply living in the abominations of heathenism, of which the grossest sexual impurity was one.

The author's remarks on the comparative criminality of these sins, must go for what they are worth. We offer no comment: it seems unnecessary.

There is one class of men who will perhaps bless the author for teaching so plainly the duty of matrimonial dissolution. It consists of some of those men who are now married to the relations of their former wives, and who possess such versatility of feeling, that they never incline to remain long with one wife. To prove that they are as penitent as the offending Jews in the time of Ezra, they may now send away their wives and take new ones. If any of them should be sent to the State prison for this act of penitence, let them rejoice that they suffer for righteousness' sake—for reducing to practice a lesson on moral reformation which the learned and Reverend author has taught them. If they have not on their side strong arguments, they will have, what has far more influence on the public mind, high authority.

Mr. Dwight, by recommending separation to those who before marriage were brothers and sisters-in-law, or uncles and nieces by affinity, avoids the inconsistency of some who dare not say that they should separate, but who say they ought not to be in the church. No one come to the years of understanding, and under the sound of the gospel, can innocently remain out of the church, unless he is unrighteously kept out of it by those who bear rule. That there are millions in Christian lands who are unqualified for entering the church, is a lamentable truth: but they are not innocent in remaining out of church fellowship, inasmuch as the disqualifying circumstances are such as they ought to have removed, after which they ought to profess discipleship. If rulers keep any man out of the church, it should be only for some disqualification which ought to be removed. If the circumstance of a man's being married to his sister-in-law is the disqualification, it must be his duty to put her away, and the church is bound to urge him to that duty as well as to others. It is absurd to say, that it is his duty now to remain as he is, and that it is the duty of the church to exclude him for so remaining.

There is certainly a mistake in the minds of some with respect to the purity which is essential to the being of a church on earth and which, in respect to individuals, is essential to their holding a place in it. The church is a nursery for heaven, and within its sacred enclosure every plant

of righteousness ought to have a place. The irreligious should be kept without, but not the imperfect who are pious. It is said, and often re-echoed by the advocates of any supposed reform, *that the church must take a stand*; and certainly it ought to maintain a stand, where Christ its head has placed it, but not where every association of reformers, in their superabundant wisdom, would place it. Let the church take her stand against the admission of those who do not give evidence of piety, and against the restraining of those who come to give evidence to the contrary. But we have no right to take a stand to keep out of the church, or to cast out of it, every one who does what seems to us to be wrong, nor even every one whom we can prove from the Scriptures to be an offender. The offences for which the apostles are found to have excluded men from the church are all of them both obvious and of a very flagrant character. We are allowed to separate the thistles, but not the tares; to which last employment even angels are not competent. Of the first, the apostles left examples, when they cast out Hymeneus and Alexander for blasphemy, and when they admonished the church to cast out the man who had taken his father's wife, and any man who might be a heretic, or rather a schismatic, after the first and second admonition. These are all the acts of excommunication either performed or recommended by the apostles, and each of them is for a great and obvious offence.

That marrying a sister-in-law is not a flagrant and obvious offence is evident from the fact, that it is approved by such pious and learned commentators as Dr. Doddridge and Adam Clarke. To the General Assembly in these United States, it has never appeared a great and obvious offence; for, in all their conflicting decisions for many years, they have not ventured to say that it violates the law of God. They have showed generally, as it seems to us, a desire to confirm the conflicting decisions of the inferior judicatories respecting it. Sessions have resorted to the expedient of granting to church members so married, dismissals stating the fact, in order that the supposed offenders might go to a church where their marriage would not be objected to, rather than be subjected to discipline in the church to which they had belonged. That they would not resort to this plan of certificate or dismissal, stating the fact, if they were certain that such marriages are sinful, is pretty obvi-

ous, when we consider that they do not grant dismissals stating the facts to those who fall into Infidelity, Socinianism, or Universalism, nor to those who fall into drunkenness, blasphemy, or fornication. We are confident that Mr. Dwight would never practise or recommend such dismissals as we have now mentioned; but some who agree with him on the general question, and who have less courage to meet all the consequences of their principles, have seen the gathering clouds, and acted on the policy expressed proverbially, in the words, "any port in a storm."

There is one circumstance which looks very unfavourably on the discipline proposed by Mr. Dwight, which is, that it is the same for both the marriages in question, though they differ at least as much in respect to relationship as marriage with a cousin and marriage with an aunt. No one expects that the degrees of discipline, shall be as numerous as the degrees of offence; but where the difference in the offences is very great, the discipline should not be quite the same. It will not mend the matter, that we call very different acts by the same odious name. We may group together as many cases of marriage as we please, and call them incest, but not one of them is either better or worse for the name.

We will remark here, that the salutary influence of discipline depends not a little on the approval of it by the church. If church members disapprove of an act of excommunication, so as to regard the excommunicated person just as favourably as they did before; if the act commands not the assent of enlightened Christians, the excision is incomplete, and the act of discipline is not likely to be profitable either to the individual or to the church.

The discipline which Mr. Dwight proposes for all cases of what he calls incest, involves very awful consequences, and for them the disciplinarian is responsible. He can meet his responsibility, if he has acted right; but if, in a case so awfully important, he has used the discipline of the church improperly, he is himself eminently an offender. Let a distinction be made between what is incidental to a sentence, and what is involved in it. If a court sentence a man to the State prison for life, that court is accountable for the confinement, hard labour, coarse fare, narrow cell, and perpetual silence which that sentence implies: but if that amount of suffering is deserved, the court can meet the responsibility with a clear conscience. But suppose the wife of that worthless man, on

hearing of his sentence, should commit suicide. That was not contemplated by the sentence nor involved in it; and for it the court could not be considered accountable. On this principle we admit that Mr. Dwight would not be accountable for *all the evils* which might arise from his discipline; but he would be responsible for the evils necessarily involved in the separation of husbands from their wives, and parents from their children, of ministers from churches and pastoral duties, where their labours seem to be successful, and also of communicants from the church. In order to warrant such discipline, it should first be beyond all reasonable ground of controversy that the marriages in question are in all cases sinful, and also that their sinfulness stands not far from the extreme point of criminality in the scale of offences.

We now proceed to the important question, *whether marriage to the sister, or niece of one's former wife, is a sin.* The statute laws of Jehovah, which have been said to forbid these marriages, are found in Leviticus, xviii., 6—18, and xx., 11—21. The first point which we ought to settle, is, whether these laws were local and temporary confined to the land of Israel and the time of the Jewish commonwealth, and necessarily expiring by their own limitation, when the Messiah established his reign on the earth; or are obligatory on us at the present time? To show that the Levitical law is still in force, some tell us that it contains moral precepts. True; and so did the laws of all ancient, and so do the laws of all modern nations. Every moral precept is obligatory; but the place it holds in the laws of China or Japan, is not the ground of the obligation, nor does the precept make these laws obligatory on us, though it holds a place in them. We had supposed the permanent obligation of every moral precept was admitted by all enlightened Christians, until we read in this volume (page 151) the following words: "It is barely possible that there may be a few statutes of a moral nature, qualifying more general laws, which were adapted only to the peculiar circumstances and relations of the Israelites. If there were any such, that very fact shows that they were binding only on them." That supposed fact we cannot admit, even as a bare possibility; but we request our readers to notice, that Mr. Dwight here recognizes the distinction between moral and positive laws. In another passage he endeavours to

show that the statutes in Leviticus xviii., are moral, and does it, as it seems, with the view of proving that they are still in force as laws. He doubtless expected good service from the distinction between moral and ceremonial law. But the marriages in the immediate family of Adam seem to have given him trouble, since he cannot say that they were morally wrong; yet, if they were morally right, and if what is moral is the same in all ages and countries, the marriage of relations at the present time cannot be an *immorality*, in the technical or theological sense of the word. To get out of difficulty, as it seems, he turns round and objects to the distinction between moral and positive transgressions, or what is the same, between *malum prohibitum* (an evil by prohibition), and *malum in se* (an evil in itself). In page 163, he has the following remarkable passage: "The application of the phrases *malum prohibitum* and *malum in se* to human laws is intelligible; but when made to the laws of God, does not seem to be logical nor happy." The distinction between moral and positive law is of long standing,—at least as ancient as the days of the prophet Hosea, who, in the name of the Lord, uses the words, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," or, to translate it freely, "mercy rather than sacrifice." It is a distinction to which theology is much indebted, and one which it seems Mr. Dwight cannot always dispense with. But if he throw away this distinction, he can gain nothing by proving that the statutes we are considering are not ceremonial; since, if there is not in God's laws, the distinction of moral and positive, any one of his statutes, so far as we know, may be as permanent as any other. Of course we speak not of those which are set aside by positive revelation, or obviously terminated by the introduction of Christianity. All others, according to the passage just cited, may be considered alike in respect of present obligations. But in reply to the former passage, respecting some moral precepts being of local and temporary obligation, it may be said, if it be so, the 18th of Leviticus may be moral, and yet may never have been obligatory on any but the children of Israel. We use this only as *argumentum ad hominem*; for we fully admit the perpetual obligation of all moral precepts.

That the ceremonial law has ceased to be obligatory, is admitted by all Christians; but there are statutes in the Jewish code which do not seem to have any connexion with

sacrifice or types, and which we do not still consider as binding on us; such, for instance, as the commands not to wear a garment of wool and flax, not to sow a field with divers seeds, and not to shave the corner of the beard. We do not regard those statutes as moral, but as positive, and therefore restricted by God himself to one place and one people. We grant it possible that those statutes may be typical; for the Jews as a nation, were a type of the New Testament church, and all their institutions might be typical. Should it now be said that the judicial laws in the 18th of Leviticus could not have been typical, and must therefore, be permanent, might we not as well plead for the permanency of the three precepts which have just been mentioned, since they have as little apparent connexion with the typical appointment as the others have?

The distinction between the moral and positive laws of God, or between *malum prohibitum* and *malum in se* requires some farther attention, and chiefly because the author has rejected it. The great principle of the moral law is, love to God and man, and is expressed in the words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself:" to this law Mr. Dwight very properly gives the name of *the duologue*, or the law of the two commandments. All that is strictly moral in the decalogue, and in the other precepts of the Bible, is contained in these two. If we had them perfectly engraven on our heart, we could not violate any moral precept. These two commandments enjoin on us that great principle, by the possession of which we resemble God, who himself is love. In benevolence, as in every other perfection, God is unchangeable. It is essential to his nature to approve of it wherever it exists, and to disapprove of the opposite. No precept opposed to that law of love is ever given by him to his creatures; and no acts inconsistent with it are ever done by him. When he punishes, it is not from any defect of benevolence; and when he commands parents to correct their children, or a State to take the life of a murderer, he commands nothing but what ought to be done in the exercise of benevolence. Putting to death may be an exercise of benevolence; but falsehood never can be consistent with that principle. It is impossible for God to lie, and what he cannot do, we may be assured he cannot sanction in others.

The distinction between moral and positive law may be explained or stated as follows: "Whatever God, because he is all perfect, can neither do nor approve, is *malum in se*, a sin in itself—a moral evil—something in opposition to his character and to his moral law. But whatever is not contrary to the great principle of benevolence, God may do, or not, according to his own will; or he may enjoin the doing of it at one time, and forbid it at another." Thus David was forbidden to build the temple of Jerusalem, and Solomon by the same unchangeable Jehovah, was commanded to build it. Both these commands were positive precepts, not moral in the sense in which we have explained it. The command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge was only a positive precept, for the act which it forbade was not necessarily evil, not being contrary to the principle of benevolence. It was not a sinful act till made so by the prohibition, and is therefore a fair instance of *malum prohibitum* (a sin by prohibition). The command given to Abraham to slay his son was a positive command, requiring an act so far from good in itself, that if Abraham had done it without the command, he would have committed a sin of the most atrocious character. The precepts respecting legal sacrifices and ceremonies are all of the positive kind. The love of God in the heart could never have suggested them to any man, even though it had been as ardent as ever glowed in a seraph. As the positive laws are not involved in the principle of benevolence, they may be changed by the divine Legislator, and they may be given to one people and not to another. The service which they require of one might be wrong if done by another, because not required of him. The moral law is made known by positive revelation to only a small part of the human race; but it is so agreeable to the light of nature, and so far engraven on every heart, as to make all men responsible for their violation of it. Positive laws are not so agreeable to the light of nature as to be discoverable in any degree by man; they are not engraven on the heart, and cannot be of any authority before they are revealed.

Of the positive statutes or precepts it may now be remarked, that they never are opposed to the moral law. When Abraham was commanded to slay his son, it was his duty to obey. The act commanded would have been right as commanded, by God. But let it be remembered, that the

deed required would not have been contrary to the principle of benevolence. The father was not required to hate his son, and the command had no tendency to produce that feeling. On the contrary, we may be assured that Abraham never felt the movements of paternal love more powerfully than when preparing for the sacrifice; and had he been allowed to embrace his hands in Isaac's blood, his love to him would have increased if possible while doing the fatal deed. The sixth commandment says, Thou shalt not kill; and in opposition to the *spirit* of that commandment, which is love to others, there never can be any positive precept; but in opposition to the *letter* of it, there have been many. The positive laws which God gave to the Jews required capital punishment. That punishment was consistent with love, as appeared very clearly in the case of the aged warrior Joshua, when in obedience to the divine command, he was proceeding to take the life of Achan.

Having showed that positive precepts are never immoral, or contrary to the grand moral principle, we proceed to show, that they promote obedience to that principle. We cannot doubt, that the moral principle in Abraham was improved by the trial of his faith under a positive command. The love of the pious Jews, both to Jehovah and to one another, was no doubt increased by that system of sacrifices and ceremonies which they were under; particularly by shutting them up unto the faith afterwards to be revealed. But the moral effect produced by positive statutes given for a time, and to one people only, will not render those statutes obligatory on other people and under another dispensation.

It is necessary to observe, that, as positive laws are never opposed to the grand principle of morality, but rather promote conformity to it, we usually find moral and positive precepts mixed up together in the divine legislation. This is illustrated by the laws of Moses in which you find moral and positive precepts in the same book, or even in the same paragraph. Even the decalogue is partly moral, and partly positive law. To love God is a moral and unalterable requisition; but it does not imply that the seventh day of the week should be distinguished from other days as a Sabbath. It is evident that the fourth commandment contains an unalterable requisition to worship God; but it also contains a positive and mutable requisition, to set apart for

that purpose the seventh day of the week. We have seen that the sixth commandment contains the permanent requisition to love our neighbour,—a part of that law of love which a God of infinite benevolence cannot change; but it also contains a positive precept respecting the taking of life, which must be variable, or there never could have been divine authority to take the life of a murderer or a blasphemer. In their letter some of the ten commandments are positive and alterable, but in their spirit they are all moral and unchangeable, like their great Author.

Let it be further considered, that the penalties annexed to the laws of God, and which he commands to be inflicted by men, are all of them positive. We agitate not the question now, whether there is a moral necessity that God should punish sin; but we speak of the penalties to be inflicted by man. These in some cases are annexed to moral precepts, as for instance to the precepts respecting Sabbath breaking, blasphemy, filial disobedience, theft, &c. The moral principle or spirit of these precepts is unchangeable; but the penalties annexed to them in the Mosaic law are not necessarily the law of Christian states. The penalties of moral transgressions, may be less in one state of society, and greater in another; and in some cases God may forbid man to punish, and take the matter solely into his own hand, as in the case of Cain.

When we speak of positive precepts being of local and temporary obligation, and so distinguished from that law which cannot change, we do not mean that there is no reason for them. We believe that God has reasons for all he does, whether his creatures can discover them or not. It has usually been remarked by theologians, that the moral law proceeds from the *nature* of God, and positive laws and institutions from his *will*. For these last he has reasons which are wise and good, but we often cannot discover them clearly; and whether we discover those reasons or not, the statutes are not laws to us, unless for some better reason, than that they were well adapted to the state of the Jews.

We hope it is obvious that theologians for many centuries past who have made a distinction between laws as moral and positive, have not been guilty of making a distinction without a difference. There is a difference in the things themselves, and there ought to be a difference in our ideas

of them, and a distinction in our language to express it. If Mr. Dwight can express the distinction better than by the words *moral* and *positive*, we entreat him to do it; but till then we must retain the phraseology of our fathers, to which we have never found any valid objection.

There is a difference, too, in the proper mode of interpreting moral and positive laws. In interpreting moral laws we regard their spirit, and guided by it depart when necessary from the letter. If we interpret the sixth commandment according to the strict construction of the letter, we must abstain, like conscientious Hindoos, even from killing a serpent; and we must condemn capital punishment, even for the most aggravated murders. We consider that we act up to the spirit of the commandment if we injure no one unjustly or unnecessarily, and if we do good to all as we have opportunity. In interpreting the moral precept, "He that smiteth thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also," we explain it as enjoining a peaceful disposition and a peaceful life, even if at considerable sacrifice of our own pride and other passions. The obligation of that precept is involved in the great command to love God and our neighbour. That principle is the large, deep-rooted stem supporting the branches of moral obligation of which all the moral precepts are the precious fruit. In interpreting the positive precepts we adhere to the letter; for we have not got, as in the other case, a great moral principle to guide us in the extensive application of them. It is true that all such precepts proceed from the will of God, and are just as obligatory as the moral law itself, on all on whom he has enjoined them; but as they derive all their authority from the will of God so announced, we must endeavour to find to whom they are given, and what is the fair and obvious meaning of the words in which they are contained. The attempt to find the principle or reason of them, and then to apply them as obligatory wherever that reason seems to hold, is what we call "the *constructive interpretation* of statute law,"—a tremendous weapon in the hand of an erring mortal; but of this we shall speak hereafter.

The Jewish code given by Moses is divided by theologians into the *moral*, the *ceremonial*, and the *judicial* law. The moral part of the Mosaic laws is binding on all the world and in all ages; whatever is agreeable to it being always approved, and whatever is contrary to it being always

condemned, by the divine Legislator. That the ceremonial part of the Mosaic law is not now a law to any people, is admitted by all Christians. The whole controversy in the church respecting the obligation of the institutions of Moses relates to the judicial part of them. It is possible that all the precepts of Moses which are not properly speaking moral, that is, all his positive precepts, are ceremonial, being the laws of a typical dispensation and people. Some of them, (as for instance those relating to ploughing, sowing, and wearing apparel,) do not seem to us to have any connection with sacrifices or the sacerdotal regulations; yet the reason of them is so much concealed from us, that we dare not affirm that they had not a typical import. That the Jubilee, with all the laws relating to it, was typical, is very plain. The same may be said of the law of primogeniture, and consequently of regulations relating to property which grew out of these laws. How far the penalties of crimes might be connected with the typical nature of the dispensation, it is difficult to say. That the law of marriage in one of its articles—that relating to the obligation resting on a man in certain cases to marry the widow of his elder brother, is connected with the typical institution, seems perfectly plain. That all the regulations respecting marriage were not connected with the typical character of that dispensation and people, is what we should not dare to affirm.

We are disposed to retain the old division of the Mosaic law into moral, ceremonial and judicial, because it is a convenient one, and no bad consequences are likely to arise from it. The judicial law related to life, property, and personal injury, and was administered by the kings and judges of the land. We are not aware that any body of Christians contend for the binding obligation of the whole of these judicial laws. The rule laid down by some is, to look for the reason of the judicial statutes, and when we find it to be a reason that exists among us, to consider the statutes which seem to arise out of it as still in force. It is easy to perceive that this rule would be of difficult and uncertain application. It is not possible for us to trace with minuteness and accuracy the similarity and dissimilarity of our circumstances to those of a people living half way to the other side of the globe, three thousand years ago, under different customs, a different government, and, what is still more im-

portant, a different dispensation of religion. If the reason sought shall be found to lay in any of those circumstances in which they differed from us, according to the rule which has been mentioned, the law founded on that reason is not binding on us. But it may lay in some of those circumstances without our discovering it, and owing to this failure, we may consider ourselves as living under a law which God never intended to be applied to our case. If some will maintain in regard to any particular judicial law of the Jews, that the reason of it still exists, it is their part to prove what they assert; not ours to prove the contrary. No man should be required to prove a negative.

According to the principle contended for, if the same reason exist for the penalties in the judicial law which existed among the Jews, these penalties should still be inflicted. Blasphemy and disobedience to parents are as bad in their nature among us, as they were among the Jews; and they are aggravated by the light of a far clearer revelation. These crimes were punished with death among the Jews. Let those who contend for the foregoing rule either show how the difference of circumstances makes those penalties improper now, or insist on the infliction of them still. Mr. Dwight very properly remarks, that old statutes may be obligatory, and yet they may not require to be enforced by the same penalties as in ancient times. True; but consistency requires him either to advocate the infliction of the same penalties, or point out the circumstances which render them unsuitable. If the penalties, which were positive enactments, may properly cease without any apparent reason; so may the laws to which they are annexed, unless they are moral. The statutes forbidding blasphemy and contempt of parental authority are moral, but their penalty is only positive: accordingly we teach, that the former are in force, and the latter not. But in any case where the preceptive part of the law, as well as the penal part of it is positive, not moral, there seems quite as much reason to conclude, that the one part has ceased as the other.

The obsolete laws of the Jews stand recorded on the sacred page for our instruction, like the record of God's dealings with his ancient church. All Scripture is profitable, but only a small part of it is law, in the strict and proper sense of the word. That which has ceased as law, is still instructive as history. We would not object to Mr.

Dwight, or any other man, interpreting the judicial statutes; but we would deny to them the very difficult right of teaching us which of these laws are obligatory, and which of them are extinct. After all the attention we have been able to give to this subject, our full conviction is, that all the laws given to the Jews are extinct, excepting those which are moral, and therefore involved in the great law of love to God and man.

We are prepared now to affirm, that if marriage among relations be the subject of the prohibitions in the 18th chapter of Leviticus, they were only positive statutes. If they were moral, what they forbid would always have been wrong: but in the family of Adam, brother and sister married under the sanction of Jehovah. God would not, in any case, sanction what is, in the theological sense of the word, an immorality. He had, as the prophet expresses it, the residue of the spirit; the strength of his creative power was not exhausted. If he would have on the earth a race of beings to people it by successive generations, and if the marriage of two near relations was morally wrong, (*malum in se*,) he would have created more than one pair of human beings at first. The human race would never have existed at all, or would have been allowed to die out with the first family, rather than God would sanction an immorality. It appears evident, then, that if marriage is the subject in the 18th chapter of Leviticus, the prohibitions there are only positive laws, and given for the Jews alone.

We hope it will not be contended that the existence of an incest law in the Bible is to be believed without proof. With respect to the importance of an incest law, or a feeling corresponding with it, in order to prevent impurity, we willingly grant that the understanding which prevails among brothers and sisters, that they are never to intermarry, is of great use. But as a preventive of improprieties between a man and the relations of his wife who is yet alive, we can have no confidence in it whatever. The wretch who, while his wife is yet alive, is, in defiance of the seventh commandment, looking out her successor, is not likely to be restrained by a law of incest. Any other woman will be in just as much danger with such a man, as his wife's sister would be, and therefore the preventive principle of some advocates of an incest law would require, that it should forbid all second marriages, lest they should be thought of during the first. But

whatever advantages some may expect from an incest law, they have no right to assert the existence of it without proof.

All who say that there is an incest law in the Bible, direct us to find it in the 18th chapter of Leviticus. The phrase in that chapter interpreted as signifying marriage is "uncovering of nakedness." Rosenmuller understands the words literally: and remarks "Michael Weber has proved, that the phrase never means marriage; and that illicit intercourse is intended." There is no other part of Scripture where the phrase is alleged to signify marriage. In the figurative language of Scripture, where God is said "to uncover nakedness," the words express his heavy judgements; and when he is said "to cover nakedness," they are expressive of his favour. The word *marriage*, and the phrase *take a wife*, are repeatedly used by Moses; and if marriage were the subject in this chapter, it is unaccountable that neither that word nor the phrase synonymous with it are ever used. In judicial statutes relating to marriage, surely the term itself would be used; for in law compositions, plainness and precision form the greatest excellence.

The first argument for considering marriage as the subject here has been noticed. The second is, that if this passage forbids only adultery and fornication, it must contain an implied sanction of them in all the cases not mentioned in this list of prohibitions. The substance of this argument is, that a law forbidding only the extreme of any vice, must therefore sanction it in all the inferiour degrees. What is no where forbidden in the Bible is allowed; but it should be remembered that what is not forbidden in one passage, along with similar vices mentioned, may be forbidden in another. We request the author, and all on his side of the question, to test their canon of criticism by the following prohibitions in the 27th chapter of Deuteronomy—the curses from Mount Ebal. The conclusions to which it would lead are the following: That a Jew might make a graven or molten image, and set it in a public place, as for instance a temple; that he might hold in contempt all the world except his own parents; that he might misdirect any traveller who was not blind; that he might pervert the judgement of any who were not strangers, widows, nor orphans; and that, in the presence of witnesses, he might smite his neighbour. By the same species of criticism, Mr. Dwight may prove that improper marriages are not the subject in the 18th

of Leviticus, because it has not a word respecting the marriage of a Jew to a Gentile, and therefore if marriage were the subject, must have implied a sanction of that crime. The passage which we are considering forbids a number of the grosser crimes; but is not to be considered as sanctioning others of the same kind that were of less enormity, and of which it takes no notice. This plan of making a prohibitory law sanction every thing which it does not forbid, if it forbids any thing else of the same kind, would make the Scriptures to contradict themselves, and also to teach both immorality and nonsense. Rejecting such implication, we deny that the words, "thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her in her life time," either teach that a man may take a plurality of wives who are not sisters, or that he may take two sisters in succession. It gives us neither positive nor negative counsel on either of these subjects. Let it be recollected that it is not the principle of implication, but the abuse of that principle, that we desire to exclude from biblical interpretation. The reason why impurity should be forbidden in this chapter, particularly between the relations mentioned, it is not necessary that we, in these latter days, should know. Perhaps they were the crimes most common among the surrounding Heathen; or perhaps the crimes to which their manners and customs afforded temptation and facility.

The next inquiry is, whether the judicial laws in the 18th of Leviticus are to be applied or interpreted *constructively*. Mr. Dwight makes great use of the constructive principle of interpretation; but he invariably calls it *implication*. As a good lawyer, he must have known that, in applying statute laws, implication must *always* be admitted, construction *never*. He is the only author we know, who uses the word *implication* in place of the word *construction*. He has made it necessary for us to state what we understand by these terms. That which is not mentioned in a prohibitory act, but which cannot take place without that act being violated, is forbidden by implication: for instance, if the statute say, "Thou shalt not marry thy sister," the express prohibition is only to the brother; but the same marriage is forbidden to the sister by implication, since she cannot be guilty of it without the statute being expressly violated by her brother. The command, then, is to the brother expressly, and to the sister by implication. The sexual intercourse forbidden expressly to the man in the 18th of Leviticus is, by fair and

obvious implication, forbidden to the other sex. To such implication as this in interpreting Scripture, we never can object. But Mr. Dwight finds, as he thinks, that a man is expressly forbidden to marry his aunt, and from that concludes that, by implication, he is forbidden to marry the niece of his deceased wife. This is a rare sample of forced construction. By *construction* we understand the meaning put on a passage, a document, or an act, different from what is literally said or done, and from what is necessarily implied. Thus the Rev'd Thomas Magot, a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England, left by his will 600*l.* to Richard Baxter, to be distributed to sixty poor ejected ministers, adding that he did it not because they were nonconformists, but because they were poor. In those evil days Mr. Magot's act was construed to be no less than the aiding and abetting of treason, and the money was accordingly thrown into chancery. There was nothing like treason expressed or implied in Mr. Magot's act; yet treason was found in it by construction. No fair definition of treason would imply an act like Mr. Magot's; but by construction, a correct definition of treason might be made to apply to his act without the smallest difficulty. The construction in the case just mentioned, is not quite so forced as that which condemns the marriage of a man to his wife's niece; but it might be more pernicious.

It is affirmed that the statute which forbids a man to approach to any that is near of kin to him, but which does not say how near, is to be interpreted by finding the one least near of kin whom he may not approach, and then inferring that he may not approach to any other who is equally near. And the amount of this inference is, that he may not approach to any more nearly related than cousins. This is an instance of constructive interpretation, and it takes for granted, what cannot be proved, that nearness of kin is the only ground of all the prohibitions in this passage, though in some of the cases there is no kindred at all. The constructive interpretation of this passage would make it wrong for a man in any case to marry the widow of his brother, an act which God in certain cases enjoined. It is time to give up a plan of interpretation when we find it conflicting with an express law of God.

Mr. Dwight is perhaps the only one who calls in the aid of mathematics to settle questions in morals and religion.

He measures out the ground round the man out of which he must travel before he can lawfully contract marriage, and finds it to be a circle as exact as can be drawn with compasses, and having the man in the centre. If Moses intended mathematics to be used in interpreting his laws, he might have spared himself much trouble, and made his meaning so plain in one sentence, that no one could misunderstand it. It was only necessary to say, "Thou shalt not marry any more near of kin to thyself, or thy deceased wife, than a cousin." If he had done so, he would have saved Mr. Dwight the trouble of writing a long chapter, and us of writing a long review of it. As Mr. Dwight has been a professional lawyer, he must know, that if an act is made against disorderly practices, and specifies a few of them, it can be applied to none which it does not specify, even though the title or heading should seem obviously to include them. This rule, which is founded in experience and common sense, is a security against oppression from constructive law. The constructive application of a law to a particular case, was often among the ablest lawyers, a matter of uncertainty; how then could the plain, illiterate man be always certain that he had not transgressed it? Of constructive treason, that nursling of despotic governments and a dark age, we all have heard with detestation. It was easy by it to take the life of a man who never suspected that he had offended. The author's constructive law of marriage would exclude from the sacred desk, from the church, and from all good society, some who can truly affirm, that they have lived in all good conscience towards God unto this day.

The constructive application of a law is especially unnecessary and improper, when the specifications given under it are numerous and minute. That they are so, makes us very certain that the legislator did not intend that the judicial authorities should add to them. The Legislator who specified in his prohibitions a full sister, a half sister by the father's side, a half sister by the mother's, and some of these whether legitimate or otherwise, surely would not leave us to place in his list of prohibitions *a wife's niece*, on the ground that he had placed in it one's own aunt. That would be doing every thing for the learner where the lesson is easy, but leaving him to his own resources where it is difficult.

Supposing that the law in Leviticus is still in force, that marriage is the subject of it, and that it is to be applied constructively, a fourth question arises, which is, whether there is any fair construction of that law by which it forbids marriage with the sister or the niece of the deceased wife? Neither of them is near of kin to the husband; they are not *the remainder of his flesh*, as some translate the words, which in our version of the Bible, are translated *near of kin*. We believe that this application of the statutes proceeds on the ground, that a man is forbidden to approach to his own sister, his aunt, or the wife of his uncle; but how the former prohibitions can be inferred, from the latter, is quite beyond our comprehension.

We proceed to mention five circumstances to which the prohibitory laws in the 18th of Leviticus might have respect, if they related to marriage, which is very unlikely: 1st. There are some relations with whom no man ever desires to marry, as, for instance, his grandmother, great-grandmother, &c. 2d. Some cases of consanguinity are regarded. 3d. Some cases of affinity. 4th. The law of primogeniture, which accounts for the directions respecting marriage to the widows of brothers. 5th. The prerogative of the husband to rule his own house, which may account for his being excluded from a greater number of females that are his seniors, than those that are his juniors. Mr. Dwight remarks that were we to look for that class of husbands who, as a class, are not only wholly denied their prerogative, but are kept by their wives under the most absolute and childlike subjection, we should find it to be the class of old husbands who have married young wives. If the author speaks of cases where the disparity of age is very great, he is probably right, for extremes meet. Old age is second childhood. But the registers of marriages will prove, that the average age of the husband in every country where registers are kept, is greater than that of the wife. This seems to be far more conducive than the reverse state of things, to good order in families and in society.

The title of any publication is expected to express the principal subject treated of; but other subjects may be discussed in it. The title to the statutes in the 18th of Leviticus is nearness of kin; but that does not prevent the writer from introducing various other subjects—various cases where there is no relationship. Mr. Dwight understands

the statutes in that chapter as extending to various cases where there is no nearness of kin, and indeed no relationship at all; of course he cannot reasonably object to our specifying a few apparent grounds of the prohibitions, besides the one mentioned in their title. We believe that if those statutes related to marriage, the five circumstances mentioned would account for them all, and would also show that the list is complete. But the difficulty with the author is, that if this list is complete, he cannot teach men their moral duties by mathematics. The ground over which the prohibitions extend will not form a circle. True it will not form a circle, but we see no necessity that it should, and we are willing to take Moses just as we find him. Those who differ widely from us on the question at issue will tell us, that they do not desire to add to the writings of Moses, but only to explain them. If they intend only to explain them, there can be no objections to that; but it appears that what they call an explanation of his laws is a constructive application, which will serve their purpose just as well as the prerogative of making additions to them. With the power of applying the statutes constructively, they are so far from requiring any more of them, that they could dispense with the most of those which Moses has left, and accomplish their purpose just as well by the few that would remain. If the constructive interpretation and mathematics ought to be used in explaining the laws of Moses, it was quite unnecessary for him to insert in his list two aunts, three sisters, and two granddaughters; since if he inserted one of each, by the prohibition on the constructive plan he would forbid all the rest.

The constructive plan makes the prohibitions expressed, and those not expressed, to form two circles, the man standing in the centre of the one, and the woman of the other; but neither of them is allowed to marry within either the one circle or the other. Now observe first, that the ground as measured out by Moses is not circular in either case, but forms quite an irregular figure; secondly, the parties do not stand in the centres. The ground in each case is an inclined plane; the man stands on his, one third of the diameter from the upper boundary; the prohibitory lines from him extend twice as far downward, among his descendants as upward among his ancestors. They extend back only to his mother, but they reach downward to his grand-daughter.

The woman stands on a similar plane, but just the reverse of the man : she stands two-thirds of the diameter from the upper extremity. The lines from her extend back to her grandfather, but not down to her grandson. Enough of this ; so long as we have the Bible, we shall not try to teach people their duty by a pair of compasses.

The tremendous discipline which the author would inflict on some good Christians, ought to be vindicated by very strong arguments. Now let it be observed that a conclusion may be supported either by a number of independent arguments, or by a number so united as to form one chain : and whether a chain be formed of argument, or of steel, its whole strength is exactly the strength of its weakest link. If we suspend a body of a thousand pounds weight upon four separate links, each of them of strength sufficient to support two hundred and fifty pounds, the whole mass is supported : but if we suspend the whole on one chain, the weakest link must either be of strength sufficient to support a thousand pounds weight, or, whatever the number and strength of the other links, the whole body must fall. The arguments used by the author and his fellow labourers to justify the church in giving over to Satan all those who have entered into the marriage relations which he objects to, form only one chain, and suspended from the 18th of Leviticus. The first link in it is, that the statutes in that chapter are laws to the Christian world ; the second, that the subject of them is incestuous marriage ; the third, that they are to be applied constructively to cases which they do not specify ; and the fourth, that by fair construction they forbid a man to marry the sister or niece of his deceased wife. We have no confidence in the strength of any link in this chain ; but though there were three of them of the greatest strength imaginable, yet if there is one of them too weak, the whole argument fails, and the supposed offenders have a right to remain in the church, or to enter into it, if otherwise worthy. We have endeavoured to try the strength of all these arguments in the course of this review, and are convinced that every one of them fails.

In addition to the principal arguments employed by the author, he has a few remarks which claim a passing notice. He tells us that Herod was reproved by John the Baptist for having his brother Philip's wife ; but he forgets to tell us, that Philip was then alive, that consequently Herod was

living in open violation of the seventh commandment. He notices the case of the Corinthian who had his father's wife, but does not tell us, that his was another case of adultery. The apostle mentions him that suffered the wrong, as well as him that did the wrong; hence it seems the father was a living sufferer from the wicked conduct of his son. It is granted that adultery is aggravated by relationship, and by various other circumstances, even when there is no relationship.

To reconcile the public to his views, the author remarks, that there is no scarcity of females. In most parts of the world this holds true. But does this justify us, in casting people out of the church for acts that are not contrary to any law of God, nor to the peace and order of society. It was not ungracious in God to forbid the use of one tree in paradise, but it would not have been well for a fellow creature, even though an angel, to forbid the use of a few more, and say to our first parents, "Ye have enough without them." Our author's reasoning here is the same which is often used by the aged miser, when from pecuniary considerations alone, he crosses the affections of his children.

In page 51, Mr. Dwight asserts that the law of incest had remained unaltered under the care of the Jewish church for fifteen centuries, and under that of the Christian church for more than seventeen centuries. On the other hand, the learned Selden, who flourished about two hundred years ago, affirms that marriage with one's wife's sister was practised among the Jews. Only one sect (the Karats) condemned such alliances, and their other rules on the subject of marriage are such that they cannot be regarded as any authority. They even forbade marriage between two whose *parents* had married together. It would seem that the first instance of opposition to marriage with a sister-in-law was in the reign of Constantine, when marriage came to be in a measure discouraged, as it ever since has been in the church of Rome.

If the incest law which Mr. Dwight contends for had been acted on by the apostles, they would have had immense trouble with their converts previously married according to the customs of the countries where they had lived. But we cannot find that they or the primitive Christians ever had any difficulty with that subject. It would seem that

they respected as valid the marriages contracted according to the different laws of the countries whither they went. If Mr. Dwight were to go out as a foreign missionary we believe that his views of the marriage question would bring him into some difficulties which the apostles never encountered, and difficulties which would impede the progress of the gospel.

The desire of confining this review within moderate bounds has led us to pass over in silence several parts of this volume, in which the author successfully replies to some of the more absurd arguments of his opponents, or laughs them down as they deserve. Though generally speaking we agree not with his views, and are not convinced by his arguments, we can freely recommend his volume for good suggestions to all who wish to investigate the subject. We applaud his zeal for moral purity, according to his own views of it. We return him our thanks for his labour in the cause; and though differing widely from his principles of interpretation, we think we have profited by his learned and laboured researches.

ART. VI. MOURNING APPAREL.

No usage prevails more widely, than that of employing rites in the deploration and commemoration of the dead. These rites, indeed, take different forms according to national character. In the East, they, in common with all things else, are marked by passion and excess; and hence, as would be anticipated, occupy a briefer period of time. Among occidental nations, they continue longer, and have more of sobriety and moderation. Those of savage tribes often embody much that is gross, and much that is foreign to their design; while those of civilized nations participate in the general purity and delicacy of cultured feeling. But there is, nevertheless, in the midst of this diversity, unity

and sameness. The usage is fundamentally *one*, and in some shape or other, it is found in all parts of the world. True, the old and the infantile, where they owe their death to intentional neglect or actual violence—as is the case in China, and extensively in the rest of the realm of heathenism—go to the grave unhonoured and unwept, or are thrown as carrion to the vulture and the kite. It is not so, however, even *there*, with the dead generally. For others there are honourable burial and impassioned lamentation. If, perchance, there be on the face of the globe, a people which has no funeral or commemorative rites relative to the departed, it may be safely presumed, on the analogy of the fact just mentioned, that such people must be sunk in the very lowest depths of barbarism.

The usage, moreover, has obtained in all *ages*. Notices of its observance are found on the first pages of the most ancient books. In Genesis they are abundant. In the Iliad they are no less so. And the history and poetry of all later times, concur in testimony to its unceasing and universal continuance.

Thus time-hallowed and universal, the usage can owe its existence to nothing local, transient, or circumstantial. The polite world may cherish it, and engraft her arbitrary and artificial fashions on it, but is by no means its native soil. It must have its root in something common to all mankind, and spring up spontaneously in the human heart. Nor is the rationalé of its origin at all abstruse. The custom is by no means isolated and singular, and unlike every thing else. It is rather one of a sisterhood of usages, all having the same parentage, and playing a like constant and conspicuous part on the stage of life.

Emotion loves symbolical manifestation. Language, oral and written, is doubtless the more important mode of revealing the inward man. But yet, though well adapted to its end, and of priceless worth, it is not entirely sufficient. Accordingly the other medium is largely employed in the expression of feeling. The orator, for instance, however well stocked his magazine of burning words, were there no eye through which the fire of his soul could flash forth, and no arm which could be wielded in varied and vehement gesticulation, would deem himself shorn of half his strength. The excited feelings of friends meeting find their readiest and fullest manifestation in the grasp of the hand, the kind-

ling of the eye, and the smile of the lips. Woman, greeting the returned husband or child, pours forth the full tide of her joy and love, not mainly in words, but in the fond and lingering embrace. Respect inclines the head; devotion lifts the hand, and bends the knee. And the deeper and more enduring the emotion, the bolder and more frequent the manifestation. Thus the Orientals, whose inward life concentrates itself in feeling, pre-eminently and characteristically delight in the symbolic.

The same impulse which prompts the soul to employ, besides the voice, the body generally, in the revelation of herself, induces also the use, subserviently to the same purpose, of those garments which man puts on chiefly to screen his shame and secure his comfort. Nothing can be more natural: for so constantly do they invest him, and so indispensable are they in respect both to beauty and utility, that they seem to constitute a part of himself. One is not indeed always, or perhaps often conscious, that his inward character is at all indicated by his apparel. Yet, trivial as the mode of indication may appear, so it is. Mirthfulness has her light and fantastic drapery; while melancholy assumes dark and sombre vestments. Vanity delights in the rich and gorgeous; modesty, in the chaste and unostentatious. Apparel images the dignified sobriety and humility of the clergyman, and the quaint saintliness of the Quaker. Regal pride glories in its diadem, its sceptre, and its robes. The characteristic peculiarities of national feeling even, have each its appropriate outward costume.

It were then to be anticipated, that the emotions of the bereaved should find an exterior and symbolic manifestation, and that its chief and prominent form should be what it is. Indeed Mourning Apparel constitutes a singularly befitting expression of those emotions.

The heart is in sorrow. Death hath removed a loved one from the circle of its communings. It feels itself blighted and desolate. At first, it solitarily pours forth its anguish in weeping. Afterwards, it whispers its griefs in the ear, and seeks the sympathy of friendship. But these outlets by no means exhaust it. It is not a momentary or ephemeral thing. A few outbursts of weeping may calm its turbulence, and sympathy may do much toward restoring serenity. But there is a still sadness which will not thus die away, but endures many a week, perchance many a month.

Business or study may occupy the thoughts, and outward circumstances conduce to happiness; but that still sadness continues nevertheless to dwell in the heart, and commingles with every thought and feeling. In fact it is not an emotion—it is for a time *a condition of being*. It craves an outward emblem—something, not like a friend, now near, now away, and when at hand half-sad and half-joyous, but like itself, ever sombre and silent, ever present. What so appropriate as mourning vesture? The wearing of one sort of apparel rather than another, is indeed a seemingly unimportant matter. Yet it affords a solace and relief by no means unfelt. The heart is never quite alone in her sadness. Something without always corresponds, and, as it were, sympathises. The burden is never unshared. We care not though this be called the language of mawkish sentimentalism. Names matter little. The usage in question is a natural expression of feeling: like all other things natural, it is simple, and beautiful as it is simple.

The same symbol subserves another end. *The heart is full of reverence for the departed*. His virtues all present themselves to the vision with a double brightness, and his faults are all forgotten: while all that was deficient in the love wherewith the heart regarded him, and every unhalloved word or act, which tended to wound his feelings, or in any way diminish his happiness, stand out bold and prominent in the retrospect—irradiated, as it were, with noon-tide sunlight. Some exteriour token seems demanded, to disclose the respect and love really cherished, and thus atone for the past, and propitiate his manes. By clothing the outward form in garments of sorrow, this token is exhibited. The usage in this aspect of it, too, is the natural and spontaneous product of human feeling.

The custom has a benign *reflex* influence. It is commemorative, as well as symbolical; and reminding us of those who are gone, it prolongs their influence. It stands in the place of the living voice and eye, encouraging to all that is virtuous, and restraining from all that is vicious. Nay, it gives that influence, for a time, an increased power: for it addresses hearts softened by recent affliction, and disposed to magnify whatsoever was excellent in the character and example of the departed one. The remark is often made, we are well aware, that once become familiar, the weeds of wo render not the countenance a whit less smiling, or the heart less

joyous. We believe it not. They constitute a solemn remembrance and monitor. If there be inappropriate mirth, they constitute a sting of reproach. Especially are they efficacious in the hour of temptation. Then they become an amulet of protection. Behold the motherless son solicited to evil, while yet the sober habiliments which commemorate his loss are upon him. How much soever unnoticed in seasons of proper employment or of lawful cheerfulness, they now irresistibly attract his gaze, and conjure him by the potent charm of maternal love, to turn a deaf ear to the voice of the syren. In fact, there are things which the most profane hardly dare do. To show disrespect, by word or deed, to the memory of the departed, has in all ages been one of the most prominent. And the heart feels instinctively, that nothing can be more irreverent, than immersion into scenes of gaiety and dissipation, while the outward form is invested with the symbols of bereavement.

The custom has a benign influence on *society at large*. It tells of the ravages, and solemnly marks the track of death. It preaches without a voice, and yet with no small eloquence and impressiveness, the evanescence of all that is earthly. It elicits sympathy in behalf of the bereaved, and helps to keep the common heart tender, susceptible, and humane.

Like everything else come down to us from our fathers, bearing the hallowed impress of antiquity, the usage has to bide the brunt of a would-be exterminating warfare. Humble and modest though it is, it *must* be battled against. Opposition to it rests mainly on a three-fold basis. *It is useless: It bears oppressively on the poor: and, by requiring the preparation of mourning apparel during the first days of affliction, it employs thought and time, as then, of all times, they should not be employed.*

The *utilitarian* objection has been sufficiently rebutted in what precedes. Or if, forsooth, utility demand a palpable, visible, sensuous benefit, then, indeed, the custom we advocate, and whatever else in society is fair and lovely, must be scouted. But who would wholly exclude the poetry of life?

The *second* ground of opposition is more plausible, but no less invalid. In the first place, we doubt whether the fact alleged be a fact. So far as our own observation has extended, the poor in case of bereavement, generally content

themselves with changing only a part of the dress, and thus avoid burthensome expenditure. In the second place, if to any extent it be a fact, it is not to be placed to the account of the usage itself. This requires only that *some* badge of mourning be worn, leaving the kind and the quantity, to taste and circumstances.* The rich of course purchase costly apparel, and invest their entire persons with it. The poor man, who is often anything but poor in pride and ambition, strains every nerve—perhaps involving himself in debt—to do, so far as possible, likewise. In thus doing, he is culpably extravagant: we defend him not, save so far as strong affection mingles with the motives operative in the case, and prompts him to render the external emblem as significant as possible. But this is far from showing that the usage ought to be abolished. For there are a thousand customs whose extinction would be universally deplored, while yet the manner of their observance by the rich, induces extravagance among the poor. In the third place, were the usage ascertained to be burthensome to the poor, and were it necessarily so, we should very earnestly maintain the preponderance of its beneficial over its deleterious effects, and therefore unhesitatingly advocate it.

The *third* objection is of very limited application, and very little force. A day or two, immediately on a friend's decease, spent in the preparation of appropriate vestments, if they are prepared by the hands of those who are to use them, is not necessarily spent unprofitably. The employment mitigates the first severity of the affliction, and thought is by no means forbidden to flow in a meditative and religious channel. If the garments are prepared by other hands, of course the objection in this case has no applicability.

It now only remains, to adduce a higher sanction of the usage than has yet been adverted to. We have termed the usage *symbolic*. To the Christian believer, it must be peculiarly interesting to contemplate the means by which the

* The poor widow, whom Irving so beautifully describes, conformed to the custom, and constitutes a fine illustration of its naturalness as an outward expression of sorrow. "She had made an effort to put on something like mourning for her son; and nothing could be more touching than this struggle between pious affection and utter poverty: a black ribbon and or so, a faded black handkerchief, and one or two more such humble attempts to express, by outward signs, that grief which passes show."

great facts and features of the Christian religion were fore-shown to the Jewish saints. Now these means were to a large extent of the symbolic kind. The Jewish ritual was characteristically symbolic. Prophets, by the medium of symbols, were themselves instructed, and instructed others, respecting the Messiah and his times. And among the symbols made use of, *apparel* was by no means the least conspicuous. That of the High Priest was of great significance. The sackcloth which the prophet often assumed, was also symbolic. These facts of themselves are sufficient to invest symbols with a high importance and sacredness. No one surely who recognizes the typical character of the Jewish ritual, and finds Christ everywhere in the Old Testament, can set a light value on them.

But if we regard Christianity itself, we discover stronger evidence still, of the propriety of the custom. In the first place, Christianity recognizes the general principle on which it rests, namely, *that the inward loves an outward and symbolic manifestation*. This principle was verified in Christ himself, as is abundantly shown by the history of his life. Whatsoever is genuinely human, he came by no means to destroy, but rather to hallow and endear. Every emotion and impulse which belongs appropriately to our nature was apparent in his character, in its purest and archetypal form.

More than this, Christianity exhibits God himself as an exemplar in this matter. There occurred on Calvary an event in which his heart was greatly interested. How sublime the manifestation of his emotions! The Psalmist beautifully calls the heavens God's vesture. When Christ died, that vesture changed its wonted hue, and became sombre and gloomy as midnight; and the brightest gem in the divine crown withdrew its shining. *God* loves a symbolic manifestation of emotion! Well may man!

We have termed the usage *commemorative*. In this aspect of it, too, Christianity puts on it a broad seal of approbation. The wonderful death of so exalted a personage as our Saviour, one would think, could not but be remembered, and exert its appropriate influence, at least among the friends and followers of Christ, without the aid of outward memorials. Christ thought otherwise. And the remembrance and influence of his death depends for perpetuity, in no small degree, on the sacramental symbols. If the out-

ward be in no way adapted and auxiliary to the inward, why was the Eucharist instituted?

To abolish the usage, then, would be to violate some of the best impulses of our nature, to deprive ourselves and others of those salutary influences which it so powerfully exerts, and to overlook a principle which is everywhere recognized in the examples of Scripture, and in the rites of our holy religion.

ART. VII. CELSUS.

By ENOCH POND, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Bangor, Me.

ABOUT the middle of the second century, and within fifty years of the death of the apostle John, lived Celsus, an Epicurean philosopher, and an avowed and bitter enemy of Christianity. He was contemporary with Lucian, the celebrated Greek critic and satirist, who dedicated to Celsus his *Pseudomantis*. Of the place of his nativity or residence, I have not been able to obtain any satisfactory information. He wrote a work against the Christians, the first that was ever written, entitled, the *True Word*.

That I do not err in assigning to Celsus so high an antiquity, is evident, not only from the fact already mentioned of his being contemporary with Lucian, but from various incidental expressions which occur in his writings. Thus, he objects to the doctrine of the Christians, that "it is but a few years since he (Jesus) delivered this doctrine, who is now reckoned to be the Son of God."* And again, "They (the Christians) worship excessively him (Jesus) that lately appeared; and think that nothing is done wickedly in respect to God, if his Son be served."* Celsus reproaches the Christians with having no temples, or houses of religious worship—conveniences with which they began to be favoured

* Orig. Contra Cels. Lib. I. et Lib. VIII.

at a pretty early period. It is remarkable, too, that Celsus refers not at all to any of those spurious gospels and revelations, which, during the second century, began to be palmed upon the world; which is evidence, that, in his time, they did not exist. About the middle of the third century, Origen, at the request of his friend Ambrosius, wrote a reply to the work of Celsus, in eight books; in which reply he speaks of Celsus as having been at that time *long dead*.*

From many passages in the work of Celsus, it is evident that he wrote during a season of persecution. He charges the Christians with "teaching *secretly* the things that please themselves, *keeping off the judgement of death impending over them*."† Again; "they that were with him (Jesus) while living, and heard his voice, and used him as their teacher, seeing him punished and dying, neither suffered with him, nor for him, nor were persuaded to despise punishments; but they even denied that they were disciples. *Yet now ye die with him*."‡ In other places, Celsus charges the Christians with "*a purpose of dying*," and with being "*forward in striving to death*."‡ In all probability, the work of Celsus was written during the reign of Marcus Antoninus, who, though a philosopher, and on many accounts an estimable ruler, was yet a cruel persecutor of the Christians.

I have already mentioned the reply of Origen to Celsus. This Reply was much esteemed by the ancients, and is spoken of in terms of high commendation by several modern ecclesiastical historians. Du Pin says that it is "not only the best work of Origen, but the completest and best written apology for the Christian religion, which the ancients have left us."‡

The work of Celsus is irrecoverably lost, except so much of it as may be extracted from the Reply of Origen. But Origen's method of reply was such—taking up all the objections of his author, and stating them at large in his own words—that it is presumed we are in possession of the more material parts of this early attack upon the religion of our Saviour. At least, we are in possession of enough to constitute a considerable volume.

This work of Celsus is of importance, if viewed merely

* Orig. Contra Cels. Lib. I. et Lib. VIII.

† Contra Cels. Lib. I. et II.

‡ Vol. II. Ch. 38.

as a *curiosity*. Who would not be interested to know what a learned Pagan philosopher, within fifty years of the Apostolic age, would object against Christianity; how he would resist the arguments in its favour; and how reason in respect to those wonderful facts, on which its credibility and its doctrines rest?

But this work has a much higher importance. Modern infidels have called in question the authenticity of our sacred books, and have insinuated that they might have been written by interested individuals, priests or monks, during the dark ages. But here is Celsus, within a half a century, or a little more, of the apostolic age, labouring to refute these very books. And it was well said by Chrysostom, "I presume he did not oppose writings which have been published since his own time."

Modern infidels have admitted that our gospels would be entitled to some consideration, if we could be sure that they were written by *the disciples of Christ*, who had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with his life and actions. But Celsus asserts, that these gospels *were* written by the disciples of Christ; he insists, and abundantly shows, that he was well acquainted with these writings;* and he undertakes to refute the Christians out of their own Scriptures. "From your own Scriptures," says he, "ye have these things. We make use of no other witness. Ye fall in your own snare." Lib. ii. Referring to the *four* gospels, he says, "Some of them that believe, in their madness, allow themselves to change the gospel from the first writing, *three ways*, and *four*, and oftener, that they may be able to deny them that confute them." Lib. ii.

The *allusions* in the work of Celsus, and his representations as to the state of public sentiment, in regard to a variety of topics, are all in accordance with the time in which he is supposed to have lived.

It is well known that the Jews, in those times, were confidently expecting the coming of their Messiah, and were ready to follow almost any one, who, with plausible pretensions, should set up for the Messiahship. This expectation is frequently indicated in the work of Celsus, especially in those parts in which he personates a Jew.

* "Let them answer me," says he, "not as one seeking information; for I know all." Contra Cels. Lib. i.

"My prophet in Jerusalem formerly said, that the Son of God would come, the judge of the pious, and the punisher of the unjust." Lib. i.

"If any one foretold to you, that the Son of God would come to men, he was our prophet, and the prophet of our God." Lib. ii.

"How could we, who have declared to all men, that one would come from God, punishing the unjust, treat him ignominiously, when he came? Why did we reject him, whom we have foretold?" Lib. ii.

"The prophets said, that he who was to come, would be a great and mighty Lord of the whole earth, and of all nations and armies." Lib. ii.

"What God coming to men would be disbelieved, when he appeared to those who hoped for these things? Or why indeed was he not known to them, who had long expected him?" Lib. ii.

"We hope surely to rise in the body, and to have eternal life, and that the *Sent* unto us will be the pattern and first leader of this; showing that it is not impossible with God to raise any man in the body. Where is he then, that we may see and believe?" Lib. ii.

There were those in the days of the apostles, who attributed an inherent *baseness* to matter, considering it as the source and centre of all evil. This led them to undervalue and neglect the body (Col 2: 23); to deny that there would be any resurrection of the body (1 Cor. 15: 12); and to doubt whether Jesus had a *real body*, or (in the language of John) whether he had come *in the flesh*. It is evident, from the work of Celsus, that these opinions prevailed in his time, and that he was himself a believer in them.

"God made nothing mortal; but whatsoever things are immortal, these indeed are the works of God; but the mortal are from others. The soul, truly, is the work of God; but the nature of the body is different. And in this respect, the body of a bat, or worm, or frog, or man, is similar. For the matter is the same, and the corruptible part of them alike. The nature of all the aforesaid bodies is common, and, being one, goes and returns into reiterating change. And nothing begotten of matter is immortal."^s

"This also is their folly, to think, that after God, like a cook, has brought in fire, and others are boiled away, that they alone will remain, not only the living, but also they who are of old dead, emerging from the earth with their *same flesh*; this is plainly the hope of worms! For what soul of man would desire a body already putrified? What sort of body, altogether corrupted, can return to the nature it had from the beginning, and the same first constitution from which it was dissolved? Having nothing to answer, they (the Christians) fly to a most absurd pretence;—*All things are possible with God*. But God can neither do base things, nor will he do any thing contrary to nature; nor, if thou shouldst desire, in thy wretchedness, any thing abominable, could God do this? For God is not the patron of vicious appetite, or of erroneous indecency, but of righteousness and justice. He can, indeed, give eternal life to the soul; 'but carcases,' says Heraclitus, 'are more fit to be thrown out, than dung.' Surely, God neither would nor could make the flesh, which is full of things not fit to be mentioned, eternal; for he is the reason of all beings; he can therefore work nothing unreasonable, or contrary to himself."^s

^s Lib. iii. iv

"The things they say of the resurrection are from their misunderstanding of the transmigration.—When they are repressed and confuted on all sides, again, as having heard nothing, they return to the same question, How then shall we know and see God? And how shall we come to him? They expect with bodily eyes to see God, and with bodily ears to hear his voice, and with material hands to handle him. They that in this manner seek God, should go to the oracle of Trophonius, or of Amphiaraus, or of Mopsus, where are seen gods of human likeness." "Let them hear, if, as a fearful and body-loving generation, they can hear any thing. If, renouncing sense, you would look up with the mind; and turning away the eye of flesh, you would raise up that of the soul: only thus shall you see God."

It is certain, from ecclesiastical historians, that as early as the middle of the second century, the Christians had become exceedingly numerous; and not only so, they were divided into sects. These facts appear in the work of Celsus; and those sects only are mentioned by him, which are known to have existed at that period.

"In their beginning, indeed, they (the Christians) were few, and of one mind; but being grown into a multitude, they are again and again cut and divided; and each of them will have their own parties: for this they wanted from the beginning."

"Some profess to be Gnostics;† and some receiving Jesus, boast themselves Christians, but yet live according to the law of the Jews;‡ and some are Sybillists. I know also some Simonians, worshipping Helena, or a teacher Helenus; and the Marcellianites from Marcellina; and the Carpocratians from Salome; and others from Marianne, and from Martha; and the Marcionites, having Marcion for their leader. Some have one teacher and demon, and some another, wickedly erring, and wandering about in much darkness, more unlawfully and foolishly than the companions of Antinous in Egypt. And these reproach one another with things most grievous, and not to be uttered. And they would yield in no respect to unanimity, being utterly disaffected towards one another."

It is proposed now to set forth, in the language of Celsus, some of his principal objections to the Christian religion; arranged, for the most part, in the order in which Origen left them, and in which, in all probability, they were left by

* Lib. vi. vii.

† The origin of the Gnostic heresy has been variously stated. Mosheim supposes that it sprung from the Oriental philosophy, and prevailed in the Apostolic age, and afterwards. Others have doubted whether it could be traced to so early a date. See Titman, *Tractatus de vestigiis Gnosticorum*. Celsus expressly mentions the Gnostics, as a sect of Christians existing in his time; and some of the other sects mentioned by him, as the Carpocratians and Marcionites, were deeply imbued with the Gnostic errors.

‡ Here were the remains of the earliest form of heresy in the church of Christ, viz. that of the Judaizing teachers.

§ Lib. v. i.

Celsus himself. The intelligent reader will perceive, not only that our canonical books of both Testaments were then in existence, and were regarded by Christians as of Divine authority, but that Celsus was well acquainted with these books, and with the early history of the church of Christ.

1. Celsus accuses the Christians of acting in violation of the laws.

"The Christians hold meetings amongst themselves secretly against the things by law established: for of meetings, those are public which take place according to the laws; but the secret are done against the things established by law."*

2. Celsus objects to the Christians, that they make too little of reason, and too much of faith.

"Some of them, willing neither to give nor receive a reason about the things they believe, say this, *Do not examine, but believe; and thy faith shall save thee.* And they say, that the wisdom of the world is evil, but the folly good. If they would answer me, not as seeking information (for I know all), but as having equal care of all; it should be well. But if they will not, but shall, after their custom say, *Do not examine, &c.*, it is necessary to teach them what sort of things those are which they say, and from whence they have flowed."*

3. Celsus finds fault with the God of the Jews and Christians, and thinks he is not superiour to that of other nations.

"The Jews borrowed circumcision from the Egyptians. These goat-herds and shepherds, following Moses their leader, being enticed by rustic frauds, esteemed God to be one. This one God they thought to be either the Most High, or Adonia, or the Heavenly, or Sabaoth, or howsoever they delight to name this very world;† and they know nothing more. It differs nothing to call the God over all either by the name current among the Greeks (Jupiter), or by that among the Indians, or that among the Egyptians."*

4. Celsus, personating a Jew, details the common scandal of the Jews of his time, relative to the conception and birth of Jesus.

"A Jew would say to this Jesus, who feigned his nativity to be of a virgin, (borrowing from the Grecian fables of Danae, and Melanippe, and Ange, and Antiope) that he sprung from a Jewish village, and from a wo-

* Lib. v. i.

† It is surprising that Celsus, who had read Moses, should say, that the Jews knew no other God, to whom they gave various names, but "this very world."

man of the place, poor, and working for her bread, who was put away by her espoused husband, by trade a carpenter, convicted of having committed adultery, being seduced by a soldier, whose name was *Panthera*; and having been put away by her husband, and wandering about ignominiously, she privately brought forth Jesus. And he (Jesus) being obliged through poverty to serve for hire in Egypt, and there having had experience in certain powers wherein the Egyptians boast themselves, returned, highly conceited of these powers, and for them proclaimed himself God. Was the mother of Jesus beautiful? And did God, whose nature admits not the love of a corruptible body, mix with her as beautiful? It was not probable that God should be in love with her, who was neither a woman of fortune, nor of royal descent; seeing she was scarce known to her own neighbours. And when she was hated by the carpenter, and cast out, neither did the Divine power save her; nor the faithful Word. These things, therefore, are nothing to the kingdom of God.*

5. Celsus discredits the divine attestation which Jesus received from heaven at his baptism.

"When thou wast washed by John, the apparition of a fowl from the air, thou sayest, flew upon thee. What witness worthy of credit saw this vision? or who heard the voice from heaven, adopting the Son of God? But thus thou sayest, and adducest as evidence some one of those punished with thee."*

6. Celsus, not presuming to deny the miracles of Christ, attributes them to magic and enchantment, with which he pretends (here and in other places) that our Saviour had become acquainted in Egypt.

"Supposing those things to be true that are written concerning healings, and the resurrection; or concerning a few loaves feeding multitudes, of which many fragments were left; or as many other things, as the disciples speaking marvellously, have narrated.† Supposing these things to be wrought by them, they are of the same nature with the works of enchanters, and with the things performed by them that have learned from the Egyptians, showing for a little money, in the midst of the markets, the grand things they have learned; such as expelling demons from men, and blowing off diseases, and calling up the souls of heroes; yea, showing sumptuous suppers, and tables, and meats differently dressed, and animals moving, not truly animals, but to the fancy appearing such. Because they do these things, are we therefore to believe them to be sons of God? Or should it not rather be said, that these are the acts of wicked and deceitful men?"*

7. Celsus, speaking as a Jew, reproaches the Jewish followers of Christ for forsaking the laws and religion of their country.

"What induced you, oh countrymen, to leave the law of your country?

* Lib. i.

† The gospel histories are here, as in other places, expressly attributed to the disciples of Christ.

Being enticed by him, of whom we have now been discoursing, you have been most ridiculously deceived, and become fugitives from us to another name, and to another manner of life. Very recently, when we punished him that led you as cattle, you made defection from the law of your country. How do you *begin* at our sacred things, but in *your progress* despise them, not having another beginning of doctrine to speak of than our law ?”

8. Celsus objects to the Christians, that their Master was betrayed by one of his professed friends.

“How were we to esteem him God, who showed the performance of nothing that he promised; but after we, convicting and condemning him, counted him worthy to be punished, he was taken hiding, and most basely flying, and was betrayed by those whom he called his disciples. Truly, it neither agrees with him that is God, to fly; nor to be led away bound; still less to be deserted and betrayed by his fugitives, and them that partook with him in all things, and that used him as their teacher, and accounted him the Saviour, and the child and messenger of the greatest God. No good general or captain was ever betrayed; no, not a chief robber, commanding those more wicked than himself, if he appeared useful to his companions. And could not that deceiver procure from the deceived as much benevolence as robbers have to their chiefs?”

9. Celsus was aware that the disciples had said, that their Master foresaw, and actually predicted, the treatment which he received from men; and to this he rejoins in the following language:

“His disciples feigned that he foreknew and foretold all things, whatsoever happened to him. The disciples said these things to excuse their master; as if one saying that one is just, should point him out doing unjustly; or calling him pious, should show him committing murder; or feigning him immortal, should set him forth as dead—prefacing to all these, that they came to pass as he foretold.” “Who, either God, or demon, or wise man, foreseeing such things coming upon him, would not shun them, if he could, but would fall into the things which he certainly knew before? How, if he foretold both him that betrayed him, and him that denied him, did they not fear him as God, so that the one should not betray, nor the other deny? But they betrayed and denied, making no account of him. For certainly, a man conspired against, and foreknowing it, if he forewarn the conspirators, they will turn away and take care of themselves. These things, therefore, came not to pass in consequence of being foretold; for that is impossible. But in consequence of their coming to pass, their being foretold is found to be a lie; for it is altogether inconsistent, that they who heard before should yet betray and deny him. What hinders others also, who, being condemned, have perished miserably, to be accounted great and divine angels? One could, with the like impudence, say of a punished robber and murderer, that he was not indeed a robber, but God; for he said before to his fellow-robbers, that he would suffer such things as he did.”

10. Celsus objects to the sufferings of Christ, that they were inconsistent with his divinity.

"If these things seemed good to him, and he was punished in obedience to his Father; then it is manifest, that to him, being God, and also willing, his sufferings were neither troublesome nor grievous. Why then does he lament, and grieve, and pray, that the fear of destruction may pass away, saying thus, *O Father, if it be possible for this cup to pass.* He said not, as the Bæcehus of Euripides, 'The demon himself shall loose me when I will.' And neither did he that condemned him suffer anything like Pentheus, going mad and being torn. When he wore the purple robe, and the crown of thorns, and the reed in his hand, why did he not now, if not before, manifest something divine, and deliver himself from that shame, and treat them that reproached both him and his father, as they deserved? And is the gore from the body of him that was crucified, such as that which flows from the blessed gods? He greedily swallowed the gall and the vinegar, impatient of thirst."^a

11. Celsus thus replies to the argument of the Christians, derived from the writings of the ancient prophets:

"Christians make use of the prophets, as preaching before the things concerning Jesus. But the sayings of the prophets can be applied to innumerable others, much more probably than to Jesus. The prophets say, that he who is to come, is a great and mighty Lord of the whole earth, and of all the nations and armies. But they did not hold forth such a pestilent fellow."

"The things that were foretold by Pythia, or the Dodonean woman, or Clarius, or in the oracle of the Branchidæ, or in that of Ammon, and by innumerable other prophets, by which the whole earth has been equally inhabited, these are placed to no account; but the things said of those in Judea, after their manner, these truly are accounted wonderful and unalterable!"

"If the prophets should have foretold that the great God, (to say nothing more intolerable) would serve, or be sick, or die; it behooved God to die, or serve, or be sick, seeing it was foretold; that, dying, it might be believed that he is God! But prophets would never have foretold this: for it is evil and unholy. Therefore it is not to be considered whether it be foretold, or not foretold, but whether it be a work worthy of God and good. But for the shameful and evil, though all madmen should appear to foretell it, it is incredible."^a

12. Celsus objects to the genealogies of Christ.

"Ye please yourselves too much, tracing his genealogy from the first man, and from the kings that were among the Jews. Surely the wife of the carpenter did not know that she had got such kindred."^a

13. Celsus urges various objections, and uses various arguments, to persuade the Christians that Jesus was not the Son of God.

* Lib. i.

"By what reasoning were ye induced to esteem him the Son of God? We were induced, ye say, by this, because we know his passion was for the destruction of the father of wickedness. And what then? Have not many others also suffered punishment, and no less ignobly? Again ye say, we esteem him to be the Son of God, seeing he cured the lame and the blind, and raised the dead.

O light and truth! With his own voice he hath expressly confessed, according as ye also have written, *Wherefore, there shall come to you others also, using like powers, wicked men and impostors*; and he names one Satan, the worker of these things. So that he denies not that these things, instead of being divine, may be the works of the wicked. And being forced by the truth, he hath at once revealed the things of others, and reproved his own things. Is it not then unreasonable, from the same works, to reckon one God, and others impostors? By what then, were ye induced? Was it because he foretold, how, being dead, he would rise again? Suppose, then, we admit that he did indeed say this. But how many others have dealt in such wonders, to persuade simple hearers, studying to deceive them? as Tamola among the Scythians; and Pythagoras in Italy; and Rampsinitus in Egypt, who played at dice with Ceres in Hades, and brought away a golden basin as a gift from her; Orpheus, also, among the Odrysians; Protesilaus in Thessaly; Hercules in Tenænis; and Theseus. Do ye think that these are, and appear to be, fables? But to you *his* voice, when he expired on the cross, and the earthquake, and the darkness, are found a beautiful and credible catastrophe of the drama! It seems that, being alive, he could not help himself; but being dead, he arose, and showed the marks of punishment, and his hands as they had been pierced! Who saw this? A mad woman, as ye say; and possibly some other of the same magical gang, either in some sort dreaming, and disposed to be deceived by fancying an apparition, (which has happened to very many,) or rather inclining to astonish the rest by such a wonder, and by such a lie to give occasion to the other impostors."

"If Jesus would really declare his divine power, it behooved him to appear to them that used him ill, and to him that condemned him, and indeed unto all. For, surely, he no more feared any man, being dead, and as ye say, being God; nor was he for this sent from the beginning, that he should abscond. If so, then he ought, for the manifestation of his Godhead, to have disappeared directly from the cross. But who hides himself, that is sent a messenger at any time, when he ought to report the things given him in commission? When he was disbelieved in the body, he preached to all freely; but when he was risen from the dead, he appears in private to a single woman, and to his intimate companions! When he suffered punishment, he was seen by all; but, rising, by one; whereof the contrary ought to have been done.*

14. Celsus ridicules the Christian religion, comparing it to that of the Egyptians, and other heathen nations.

"The matters of their (the Christian's) faith may be compared to the practices of the Egyptians, with whom are splendid sacred places, with groves and temples with vestibules and porches, to be admired for extraordinary grandeur, beauty, and ceremonies; but when one enters, he will perceive the object of worship to be a cat, or ape, or crocodile, or goat, or dog. These venerable things of the Egyptians, it being pretended that

* Lib. ii., vii.

there is in these brutes some symbol of divinity, or whatever other name the prophets please to give them, have an appearance of no vain mysteries to them that are skilled in such things. But they (the Christians) are fools, presenting nothing more venerable than the goats and dogs of the Egyptians, in their narrations concerning Jesus."

"They will not bear that we should think Castor and Pollux, and Hercules, and Esculapius, and Bacchus gods; because they were men, though the chief, and showed many and excellent deeds for the sake of men; but they say, that Jesus when dead, was seen by his own companions. They say he was seen, and yet a shade. After Aristæas, the Proconnesian, had disappeared so divinely from among men, and again showed himself manifestly, and many ages afterwards, travelling through many places of the world, and reporting wonderful things, and Apollo had chosen Aristæas to the Metapontius, to abide in the lot of the gods; yet nobody esteems him a god. Nobody esteems Abaris, the Hyperborean, a god; who had such power as to be carried with an arrow that was shot. It is said of Clazomenius, that his soul, after leaving the body, went about without the body; and neither have men esteemed him a god; nor Cleomedes the Astypalaian, who, entering into an ark, was not found within, but flew out by a certain divine fate, when some one broke the ark to take him. And any one may tell of many other like things."*

"They who worship him that was taken and put to death do much the same with the Getæ, worshipping Zamolxis; and the Cilicians, Mopsus; and the Acarnians, Amphiloehus; and the Thebans, Amphiæreus; and the Lebadians, Trophonius. Nor do the honours paid to Adrian's beloved youth Antinous, in Antinoupolis of Egypt, differ any thing from the honour they give to Jesus. If you would compare Apollo or Jupiter to him, they would not bear it. They laugh at the worshippers of Jupiter, because his sepulchre is shown in Crete; and nevertheless worship him who is of the sepulchre, not knowing how and for what the Cretans do the same."*

16. Celsus refers to the declaration of Paul (1 Cor. 1: 26—29), "*Not many wise men after the flesh*,"* &c., and charges the Christians with endeavouring to persuade only the ignorant and the foolish.

"It is commanded by some Christians, not the most prudent but most unlearned, Let none come who is learned, none wise, none prudent; for these things are esteemed evil among us. But if any be unlearned, if any foolish, if any be a child, let him come boldly. Hence confessing, that they neither will nor can persuade any other but the foolish, and ignoble, and stupid, and slaves, and girls, and boys."

"But what evil is there in being learned, and in having carefully studied the best reasons, and in being, and appearing to be, prudent? And what hindrance is this to the knowledge of God? Yea, doth it not rather conduce to it, since by this, one may be better enabled to come to the truth. We see, indeed, those who are showing infamous tricks and juggling in the market-places, never coming to a company of prudent men, nor daring to show their tricks among them; but where they see young people, and a crowd of slaves and foolish men, there thrusting in and making a show. And we likewise see in their houses, wool-dressers, and leather-cutters, and fullers, the most illiterate and most rustic, not daring to say anything before their more aged and more prudent masters."

* Lib. iii.

"They who call to other mysteries make proclamation thus: 'Whoever is pure in hands, and prudent in speech; whoever is pure from every crime, and whose soul is not conscious of any evil, and whose has lived well and justly; these things *they* proclaim who promise the purgation of sins.' But let us hear now, whom these call: 'Whoever,' they say, 'is a sinner; whoever is without understanding; whoever is childish; and, to say plainly, whoever is wretched; the kingdom of God will receive him.' The sinner, then, is not he the unjust, and the thief, and the breaker through of walls, and the poisoner, and the committer of sacrilege, and the breaker into tombs? Who else would call such to be their followers?"

"They say that God is sent to sinners. But why was he not sent to them that are without sin? What evil is there in not having sinned? They declare, that God will receive an unjust man, if he humble himself under his wretchedness; but the just, if he look up to him with virtue, he will not receive."

17. Celsus objects strenuously to the doctrine of Christ's incarnation.

"The Christians and Jews talk most basely, the one saying there has descended, the other, there is to descend to the earth, some God, or Son of God, the justifier of them that are here; and the confutation needs not many words. What did God mean by such a descent? Was it that he might learn the affairs of men? Or did he not know all? He knew, indeed, say they, but he did not rectify; nor was it possible for him, by divine power, to rectify, if some one were not sent, that should be born to this purpose. But if God himself shall descend to men, then he must desert his own throne. For if you should change any one thing, even the least here, all things overturned, would go upon you to ruin." "It is manifest, therefore, that they murmur these things concerning God neither holily nor purely. And they feign these things to the terror of the vulgar; neither say they true things concerning necessary punishments to them that have sinned. So that they are like those who bring forth spectacles and fearful sights, in the mysteries of Bacchus."

"I say nothing but things established of old. God is good, and beautiful, and happy, the most comely, and the best. But if he descend to men, there must be a change upon him, even a change from good to bad, and from comely to vile, and from happiness to misery, and from the best to the worst. Who, then, would choose such a change? It is natural, indeed, to that which is mortal, to be altered and transformed; but to the immortal, to be still the same thing, and in the same manner. By no means, therefore, would God admit of this change. If God has descended, either he is truly changed, as they say, into a mortal body, (and that is before shown to be impossible,) or he is not changed, but makes the beholders think so, and deceives and lies."

"The Jews on their part say, that life being filled with all wickedness, one should be sent from God, that the unrighteous may be punished, and all things purged, similar to what came to pass at the deluge."

"And the Christians, again, adding some words to those said by the Jews, say that the Son of God is already sent for the sins of the Jews; and that the Jews, punishing Jesus, and giving him gall to drink, drew gall from God upon themselves."

"The Jews and the Christians are like a company of bats or ants, coming forth from their holes, or frogs gathered in council about the

* Lib. iv.

ditch, or worms assembled in a corner of the clay, and contending with one another, which of them should be the greatest sinners."¹⁰

"If the Divine Spirit was in a body, it altogether behoved it somewhat to excel others in greatness or beauty, or strength, or voice, or awfulness, or eloquence: for it is unaccountable that what had something divine, more than others, should differ nothing from another; yet this Jesus differed nothing from another; but, as ye say, was little, and hard-favoured, and ignoble. Further, if God would, like Jupiter with the comedian, waking out of a long sleep, deliver mankind from evils, why did he send into one corner that spirit, as you say, when many bodies ought to have been inspired in like manner, and sent over the whole inhabited earth? But the comedian in the theatre, making laughter, wrote that Jupiter, being awakened, sent Mercury to the Athenians and Lacedæmonians; yet you do not think it ridiculous to represent the Son of God as sent to the Jews. These were most divine nations from the beginning, viz., the Chaldeans, the Magi, the Egyptians, the Persians, and the Indians: but the Jews, to whom he is sent, are presently to perish! He that knew all things did not understand that he sent his son to evil men that would sin and punish him!"¹¹

18. Celsus charges the Jews and Christians with arrogance, in thinking God their peculiar favourite, and disposed to show them particular attention and regard.

"They say, God hath foreshowed and foretold all things to us; and leaving the whole world, and the heavenly motion, and overlooking the wide earth, manages the government amongst us only; and with us alone he corresponds, and ceases not to send and seek how we should be ever with him. All things, they say, are subjected to us, the earth and water, and air, and the stars; and all things are for our sakes, and ordained to serve us. Now, because some among us have done wickedly, God will come to us, or send his Son, that he may burn up the unjust, and that we, who remain, may have eternal life with him. These things are more tolerable said by worms or frogs, than declared by Jews or Christians, contending one with another."¹²

"The Jews were fugitives from Egypt. These men, God's friends, never did anything worth the speaking of; nor were they ever held in esteem, nor in any account. They took in hand to draw their genealogy from the first seed of magicians, and men that were deceivers, bringing for witness obscure and ambiguous sayings, hid somewhere in darkness, and explaining them to those that are unlearned and without understanding. There was never any controversy in former times concerning such names; but now the Jews dispute about them, with some others."¹³

"Several have laid claim to antiquity, as the Athenians, and Egyptians, and Arcadians, and Phrygians, saying, that some with them sprang from the earth, and each of them bring evidences of this; but the Jews, in some corner of Palestine, wholly unlearned, and not having heard before those things sung of old by Hesiod, and innumerable other divinely inspired men, have composed, most improbably, and most inelegantly, concerning a certain man, formed by the hands of God, and inspired, and a girl taken from his rib, and commandments of God, and a serpent opposing these, and the serpent getting the better of God's commands; such a fable as is told by old wives. And they most impiously make God from the

* Lib. iv.

beginning weak, and not able to persuade one man whom he had formed. Then a deluge, and a monstrous ark having all things within it, and a dove and crow, messengers;—adulterating and falsifying Deucalion: for I reckon they had no forethought of these things coming to light, but were plainly telling a fable to infant boys."

"The begetting of children out of time—the treacheries of brethren—the father's grief—the wiles of mothers—the wealth acquired by Jacob with Laban—that God gave his sons asses, and sheep, and camels—that God also gave wells to the just—the things concerning Lot and his daughters, more unlawful than the Thyestian evils—the hatred of Esau to Jacob—Simeon and Levi seeking revenge upon the injury of their sister, who was seduced by the son of the King of Shechem—the brothers selling the son of Jacob, and the brother sold, and the father deceived, seeing he had no suspicion of his sons, when showing Joseph's coat of many colours, but believing them, lamented as lost Joseph who was serving in Egypt—the dreams of the chief butler and of the chief baker, and of Pharaoh and the interpretation of them—Joseph being led forth from the prison, that he might be entrusted by Pharaoh with the second throne among the Egyptians—and the sold made beneficent to the selling brothers, famished, and sent to market with asses—Joseph, who was sold for a slave, made free, and with pomp returning to his father's funeral, by whom that illustrious and divine generation of the Jews, grown into a multitude in Egypt, was commanded to sojourn somewhere without, and feed cattle in vile places till their flight:—the more moderate, both of the Jews and Christians, allegorise these things, and being ashamed of them, fly to the allegory; yet these are not such things as admit an allegory, but are manifestly told as the merest fables. The allegories that have been written concerning them are much more shameful and absurd than the fables, by a marvellous and altogether shameless folly of putting things together, that can in no way be fitly connected. I knew a dispute of that kind of one Papius and Jason, not worthy of laughter, but rather of pity and hatred.* I do not, therefore, set myself to confute them; for they are every way manifest, especially if one would have patience, and bear to give attention to the writings themselves."†

19. Celsus objects to the Christians, that their writings ascribe unworthy passions to the Supreme Being.

"Their writings ascribe human passions to God, speaking of his wrath against the ungodly, and threatenings against sinners. Would it not be ridiculous, if a man, being angry at the Jews, should destroy them all, and burn their city, they were so naughty; but the great God, as they say, being angry, and enraged, and threatening, sends his Son, and he does such things as these."‡

20. Celsus objects to the Christian Scriptures, that they make too much of man, distinguishing him above the brute

* This dispute or dialogue, in which a professed Christian is represented as disputing with a Jew, is the only work of the early Christians to which Celsus expressly refers. It is supposed to have been written about A. D. 140. It seems that the allegorizing method of interpretation, which afterwards became so prevalent, and to which Origen was so much attached, had begun to be adopted so early as the days of Celsus.

† Lib. iv.

creation, and representing other creatures as subjected to him, and intended for his use and benefit.

"They say that God made all things for man. Thunders, and lightnings, and rains are not the works of God. Or if one should grant these to be the works of God, they are no more for nourishment to us men, than to the plants, and trees, and herbs, and thorns. And if you should say, that these grow for men, viz. the plants, and trees, and herbs, and thorns; what more do they grow for men, than for brute animals? We indeed, working hard, and wretched, are scarcely and laboriously nourished; but all things grow to them unsown and untilled. Or if you shall repeat this of Euripides, 'That the sun and night serve mortal men;' what more us, than the ants, and the flies? for to them also the night is for rest, and the day for seeing and working.—If any should say, that we are the rulers of animals, because we hunt other animals, and feast on them: I shall reply, Have not we been rather made for them, because they hunt and eat us? Besides, we have need of nets, and arms, and dogs, against the hundred beasts; but nature hath furnished them with arms of their own, which easily subdue us to them. To what you say, that God has granted you to be able to take and kill the wild beasts, we answer, that before there were cities, and arts, and commerce, and armour, and nets, men were caught and eaten by wild beasts; but wild beasts were not taken by men. And in this respect, God has rather subjected men to the wild beasts.—If men seem to excel the brutes, because they inhabit cities, and use the commonwealth, and magistracies, and governments, this is nothing to the purpose; for the ants and bees do the same. The bees have a ruler, and service, and battles, and victories, and destructions of the vanquished, and cities, and precincts, and succession of works, and judgements executed upon the idle and the evil. And the ants are most industrious in providing for the winter;—they help one another with their burdens, when they see any one fatigued;—to the dead ants the living set apart some proper place, and these are to them the monuments of their fathers. Yea, and meeting one another, they hold conversation, so that they do not wander from their ways. Is not, therefore, the completeness of reason with them? If one were to look down from heaven upon the earth, which would he think to excel, the things done by us, or those by the ants and bees?—But if men value themselves somewhat, by magic, yet even in this, serpents and eagles are wiser, seeing they know many antidotes against poison, and remedies of evils, yea, and the powers of certain stones for the preservation of their young, which, if men obtain, they think they have a possession worthy of admiration.—But if man be thought to excel other animals, because he receives the Divine notice, let them that say this know, that even in this many other animals will be opposed to him; for what would one call more divine, than to know and foreshow things to come? Now men learn this from other animals, and chiefly from birds. And as many as perceive the indication of these, they are prophets. But if birds and prophetic animals teach us by symbols things foreknown from God, these seem to be so much nearer to the divine conversation, and to be wiser and more beloved of God."—"No animal appears to be more observant of an oath, nor more faithful in respect to divine things, than the elephant: showing that he has the knowledge of God.—The storks are more pious than men, requiting their parents, and bringing nourishments to them; and so is that Arabian bird, the phoenix, who, after many years, came into Egypt, carrying its dead father, and burying him in a globe of myrrh, and putting him in the temple of the sun."

"The things around us, therefore, were not made for man, more than for the lion, or the eagle, or the dolphin; but this world, as the work of God, is entire and perfect, being composed of all things."*

21. Celsus blames the Jews for worshipping (as he supposes) the angels, and not rather the sun and moon.

"The Jews may be justly wondered at, since they worship the heaven, and angels that are there; but the most venerable and most powerful parts of heaven, the sun and moon, and the stars, both fixed and planets, these they despise; as if it were possible that the whole, indeed, should be God, but the parts of it not divine; or as if it were well to worship them that approach in darkness to those that are blinded by wrong magic, or that dream by obscure apparitions; but to make no account of those, which prophecy so clearly and splendidly to all, by which are brought forth rains, and heats, and clouds, and thunders, and lightnings, and fruits, and every production, by which God is revealed to men."*

22. Celsus insists that it is proper for every nation to have its own religion and laws; and blames the Christians for separating from the Jews and others, and pretending to have the only true religion.

"The Jews, being a proper nation, and making laws according to their own country, and observing these diligently amongst themselves, and keeping a religion such as they ought, seeing it is that of their country, do like other men: because all men follow the custom of their country, whatever it be. Now this appears to be useful, not only because it came into mind to different persons to make laws differently, and the things publicly enacted ought to be kept, but because the different parts of the earth, having been from the beginning divided according to certain limits of jurisdiction, the same are also separately inhabited. And certainly the things done within each of them would be rightly practised; but it would not be holy to dissolve the laws enacted, from the beginning, in respect to different places."

"And now I will ask these (the Christians) whence *they* came? Or what law of country have they leading them? They will say, none. They have made defection from the Jews. They themselves proceeded from thence, and bring their teacher and prelate from no where else."

"One might use Herodotus for a witness against them, saying thus: The inhabitants of the city Morea, on the confines of Lybia, thinking to be Lybians, and not Egyptians, and not being able to endure the religion of Egypt, desiring not to be restrained from cows, sent to Ammon, saying that there was nothing common to them and the Egyptians; for they dwelt without the Delta, and they desired that it might be lawful for them to eat without restriction. But the god did not suffer them so to do, saying, That is Egypt which is watered by the Nile; and Egyptians are those, who, dwelling below the Elephantine city, drink of that river."

"It is far from being unjust, that each people should religiously observe their own institutions. To be sure, we shall find the greatest difference of these, according to the nations; and yet they think, each of them, that they especially have good laws; the Egyptians, inhabiting Meroe, wor-

* Lib. iv. v.

shipping Jupiter and Bacchus only ; but the Arabians, Ourania and Bacchus ; and all the Egyptians, indeed, Osiris and Isis ; but the Saitae, Minerva ; and the Naucratiæ, recently, Serapis ; and the rest, according to the provinces. And some abstain from sheep, reverencing them as sacred ; some from goats ; some from crocodiles ; some from cows. But the Jews abstain from swine, abominating them. To the Scythians it is comely to feast even upon men. Yea, there are some of the Indians, who, eating their fathers, think they are doing funeral piety."

"Pindar seems to me to be in the right, saying, that *the law is the king of all*. If, according to these things, the Jews would diligently observe their own law, this were not blameable in them. But let them not, as more wise, boast and turn away from the communion of others, equally pure." "For I reckon it differs nothing to call the Most High, Diespiter, or Jupiter, or Adonai, or Sabaoth, or Ammon (as the Egyptians) or Pappai (as the Scythians). Neither are the Jews holier than others, because they are circumcised ; for so were the Egyptians and Colchians formerly ; nor because they abstain from swine ; for so, likewise, do the Egyptians, and from goats also, and sheep, and oxen, and fishes ; and Pythagoras and his disciples from beans, and all animals. Neither, indeed, is it at all likely, that they are esteemed with God and beloved more than others, and that angels should be sent to them alone, as having obtained some region of the blessed : for we see both them, and their region, of what things they should be worthy. Let that company therefore go, bearing just punishment of vain boasting, not knowing the great God, but being seduced and deceived by the magic of Moses."

23. Celsus urges against the Christians, that if Jesus were an angel from God, by their own confession, he was not the first, nor the only one that has been sent.

"Passing by whatever things are confuted concerning the Teacher, let him be thought of as truly some angel ; but did he come the first and alone, or have others come before ? If they would say alone, they would then be convicted of speaking contrary to themselves ; for they say that others came often, yea, sixty or seventy together, who became evil, and were punished with chains, being cast down into the earth, from whence also their tears are warm fountains ; and that there came also to his own sepulchre an angel, some say one, and others two, showing to the women, that he was risen ; (for the Son of God, it seems, was not able to open the sepulchre, but needed another to remove the stone ;) an angel came also to the carpenter, on account of Mary's being pregnant ; and another, on account of the infant's being obliged to fly ; and what need we to speak of all, and enumerate those said to be sent, both to Moses, and to others of them."¹⁶

* Lib. v.

[To be Continued.]

ART. VIII. ROMANISM AND JUSTIFICATION.

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THE doctrine of justification is an essential article in the Christian system. It is that doctrine, in which the primitive Christians gloried pre-eminently. The Reformers considered it *the* article, by which the church was to stand or fall; while the English martyrs and our Puritan fathers have ever clung to it as to the last plank after a shipwreck. And no marvel; for assuming the doctrine of our lost and ruined condition by sin—as surely we may assume it at present—the doctrine of justification is no other than *the way of a sinner's acceptance with God*.

But what is this doctrine? and what do we wish to be understood as holding when we speak of the justification of a sinner before God?

We adopt here the language of the *Westminster Confession*, and we hold, that “those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them; but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting them as righteous, not for anything wrought in them or done by them, but for Christ’s sake alone: not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them—they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness, by faith.”

If it were possible to make this language clearer, we would say it is our belief, that man, being by nature wholly destitute of holiness, can never, by any act of his own, prepare a ground of justification before God; that the notion of an *infused* righteousness, as affording any portion of this ground, is clearly an error, since all right exercises and all good works are the results of faith—or, in other words, we distinguish between justification and sanctification: we suppose, moreover, that faith being the instrument of justification, and thus considered, an act of the creature, cannot *itself* be that, which is reckoned to man’s benefit; but that the *whole merit of Christ’s work*, called also *Christ’s righteous-*

ness, and God's *righteousness*, is that which is reckoned, and thus justifies the sinner;—in this life, clearing him from condemnation, and hereafter, by *declaring his acceptance before God*: in a word, that God is the *justifier*, providing and declaring the sinner's acquittal and acceptance before him; that the subject is a *sinner*, wholly without holiness until he accepts Christ; that the ground is *Christ's work only*; and that faith is the *instrument*, clearing us from condemnation, and for Christ's sake, disposing us to all good works as its *evidences* and *fruits*.

But is this view according to Holy Scripture? Essentially, it seems to us, it is: and we cannot well conceive how an honest mind can deduce any materially different views of justification from such passages as the following: "I know it is so of a truth; but Oh! how shall a man be *just* before God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand." "If I be wicked, why thus labour I in vain? For He is not a man as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgement: neither is there any days-man betwixt us that might lay his hand upon us both." (Job 9: 1, 2, and 29, 32, 33.) "If there be a controversy between men—then they shall *justify* the righteous and *condemn* the wicked." (Deut. 28: 1.) "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that *condemneth* the righteous, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." (Prov. 17: 15.) "Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee but to *do justly*, love mercy, and walk *humbly* with thy God?" (Micah 6: 7, 8.)

These were the views of humble inquirers after eternal life under the Old Testament dispensation. No doubt these men were encompassed with many difficulties; but they had some light: they had sacrifices pointing to Christ; and they had the promise, "*In the Lord* shall all the seed of Israel be *justified*, and shall glory." (Isaiah 45: 25.)

In the New Testament the teachings on this important subject are more numerous and more explicit. "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." (John 1: 29.) "Neither is there any other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4: 12.) "Justified freely by his grace, through the

redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3: 24.) "To him that worketh not, but *believeth* on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. 4: 5.) "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by *faith*, without the deeds of the law." (Rom. 3: 28.) "Faith which works by love." (Gal. 5: 6.) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." (Rom. 8: 1.) "Who shall lay any *thing* to the charge of God's elect? It is *God* that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is *Christ* that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God." (Rom. 8: 32, 33.)

We will only add, that if there be any doctrine on which the apostles were zealous and even exclusive, it seems to be that of justification by faith. Paul reprov'd *Peter* himself for seeming, in one instance, to have departed from it. With the *Corinthians* he calls it "*another gospel*," which the teachers of the law exhibited: to the *Galatians*, he makes equally strong remonstrances, and would that those were even "cut off, which troubled them" with so fundamental an error. (See Gal. 2 and 3.)

We might proceed to show that nearly *all the Reformed Church* are agreed in the sense and importance of this doctrine. Having been lost or dreadfully obscured after the days of Augustine, it was first revived by Luther: and then the whole body of the Reformed came to fix and adopt it in their several formularies. With the exception of the Unitarians, we believe it may safely be asserted, that there is no branch of the Protestant Church which does not receive, teach, and attach great importance to the doctrine which, for substance, we have now stated. He who would be convinced of this, may consult "a Harmony of their confessions," including that of *Augsburgh*, the latter *Helvetic*, *French*, *Belgic*, *Bohemian*, *Scottish*, *Westminster*, *Savoy*, *Moravian*, *Church of England*, *Baptist*, and the *Methodist Episcopal*. (See "Harmony of the Confessions of Faith of the principal Christian churches, published with Scott's History of the Synod of Dort:" Utica, 1831.)

We have thus the doctrine before us, our scriptural reasons for holding it, and the agreement of the church in regard to its meaning and importance. It is not denied, indeed, that there is less preaching of it in some parts of the church than in others; and we will not conceal our fear

that among some individuals attached to these churches, there is much questionable speculation on this subject, and a melancholy departure from the example of our fathers in the prominence and frequency with which it is brought forward. But still they profess to hold to it; and *salvation by the blood of Christ alone*, is the great point in which the whole mass of what are called *evangelical Christians* essentially agree.

If then this great doctrine is even lost sight of, or perverted, we have reason to be alarmed. If it is wholly or partially denied; if it is omitted, or obscured, and rendered useless by substituted truths, or by the presentation of the external and subsidiary parts of religion in the room of it, until the inquiring sinner has no right views of the way of salvation;—there is ruin to souls, and high dishonour to God in such a course, and it ought to be exposed.

Now this is the charge which we have to make with regard to the system of faith, usually called **ROMANISM**. As it is now exhibited, and ever has been since the settlement of her dogmas by an infallible council, we undertake to show that it is, to say the least, entirely *defective* with regard to the great doctrine of justification. *It does not exhibit the true method of salvation by the blood of Christ!* And this, we take occasion to remark, is, in our view, the most successful manner of attacking this “mystery of iniquity.” It was the great Reformer’s method. After some better acquaintance with the nature of the enemy with whom he was called to contend, he insisted mainly on the entire departure of the papacy from the primitive faith on the subject of justification. Here was the tug of strife, and here, through the blessing of God, he finally conquered.

This method does not find itself embarrassed with doubtful questions;—what **Romanism** is, in doctrine, being palpable and easily shown. It does not attempt to settle the question of the *possibility* of personal piety in that communion: it makes no attack on individual character, nor goes to say how much may, or may not, be true of the corruption of their religious orders. It is simply a showing of the relations of this system to the method of a sinner’s acceptance with God. We affirm, and surely this is enough for one exhibition,—that *Romanism is grossly in error with respect to the doctrine of justification!*

This we shall now proceed to show from *three* sources

of evidence : from their *own standards*, from *examples of some of their best preachers*, and from a view of their *cereemonies*, as they are weekly and daily exhibited.

I. What then are the **DOGMAS** of the Roman Catholic church on this point ?

We shall quote principally from the decrees of the *Council of Trent*,—a council, as most of our readers know, which was called about the middle of the sixteenth century, and for the express purpose of settling the faith and discipline of the church.

They first give their views of *original sin*, in which (with the exception of a few fooleries in regard to the virgin Mary—and denying that concupiscence is of the nature of sin,) we find no great occasion for dissent. The Roman church admits that all men are born in sin and condemnation, and that this dreadful condition is the same in all men, as it was with Adam, until they are in *some way* changed and justified before God. Now what is *their* method ?

First, they confound justification with sanctification, and make it to consist in essential holiness of soul, as well as in the work of Christ, which delivers from condemnation and sin.

This work, in infants, they hold to be universally wrought by *baptism*, when rightly administered, and that the merits of Christ, together with a holy principle then infused into the soul, justify the subject before God, and constitute his title to everlasting life. These infants are now Christians, and should they lapse afterwards, they are to be restored by the sacrament of penance and confession to a priest, connected with contrition of heart and satisfaction of almsgiving, fasts and prayers. As to adult sinners, (i. e. we suppose, heathen and unbaptized persons,) the work of justification is effected in the same manner. By baptism they receive an infused righteousness, and on account of this, together with the merits of Christ, they are justified : but there is this further in their case, that their previous doings constitute a *preparation* : they have a real merit of *congruity*, as they speak, as all good works have afterwards a merit of *condignity*.

Such is the outline : let us now see, if the view we have given, is sustained by proper authorities.

"Whosoever shall affirm," says the Council, "that justification received is not preserved, and even increased in the sight of God, by good works ; but that good works are only

the fruits and evidences of justification received, and not the causes of its increase—let him be accursed.” [See, *Decreta et Canones Concilii Tridenti, Sessio sexta: Canon, 24.* Decrees of the Council of Trent—Cramp’s translation, pp. 109, 110, et cet.]

Again; “Justification is not remission of sin merely, but also sanctification, and the renewal of the inner man, by the voluntary reception of grace and Divine gifts. [Ibid, chap. VII. § 1st.] Again; “Whosoever shall deny that the guilt of original sin is remitted by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, bestowed in baptism; or shall affirm that that wherein sin truly consists is not wholly uprooted, but only cut down or not imputed—let him be accursed. [Session 5. § 5.] “The instrumental cause [of justification] is baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which no one can be saved.” [Session VI. ch. VII.]

As to infused righteousness, they hold the following language. “The sole formal cause [of justification] is the righteousness of God—not that by which himself is righteous; but that by which he makes us righteous:—which being induced by him, we are renewed in the spirit of our minds, and are not only accounted righteous, but are properly called righteous, receiving righteousness in ourselves.” [Ibid.] Again; “Whosoever shall affirm that men are justified solely by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ—to the exclusion of grace and charity which is shed abroad in their hearts, and inheres in them—let him be accursed.” [Ibid. Canon XI.] And once more: “The faith which justifies, joined with other virtues, is properly the formal cause, and not the efficient or instrumental cause of justification: i. e. these virtues put together, being the effect of God’s grace, be our new ~~creature~~ and new justice in Christ.” [Rhemish Testament: Comment. on Gal. v. 15.]

But a *preparation* on the part of the sinner, is also taught. “Whosoever shall affirm that the ungodly is justified by faith only, so that it is to be understood that nothing else is required to co-operate therewith in order to obtain justification; and that it is on no account necessary that he should prepare and dispose himself by the effect of his own free will—let him be accursed.” [Sess. V. Can. 9th.] This grace may be lost however: it may be lost by *Infidelity*, or by any *mortal sin*: and when lost, how is it to be regained? The Council instruct us. “Those who by sin

have fallen from the grace of justification received, may be justified again, when—moved by Divine influences—they succeed in regaining their lost grace, by the sacrament of penance, through the merits of Christ.” [Chap. xiv.] “Therefore we must teach, that the penance of a Christian man after his fall is very different from baptismal penance, and includes not only the cessation from sin and the hatred thereof, but also the sacramental confession of sin, with priestly absolution :—satisfaction also by fasts, alms, prayers, and other pious exercises of the spiritual life.” [Ibid.]

It only remains, that these good works are *meritorious*, and entitle us to a real reward in the life to come. “Therefore,” say the Council, “eternal life is to be set before those who persevere in good works unto the end and hope in God, both as a favour mercifully promised to the children of God through Christ Jesus, and as a reward to be faithfully rendered to their good works and merits, according to the Divine engagement.” [Session 6th, ch. 17th.] “We will prove,” says their own Belarmine, “that this is the common opinion of all Catholics, that the good works of the just are truly and properly deserving eternal life.” [Belarmine, *De Justif. L. v. cap. I.*]

Thus is faith made void by these infallible decrees. Christ's righteousness is divided with human merit, and men are taught to rely on themselves and not on him, in the momentous concerns of the soul's Redemption.

In the case of infant justification, so called, we do not see how the subject is to be referred to Jesus Christ at all. Not before justification certainly : nor afterwards ; for then they are to be treated as Christians ; and if they relapse, are to be restored by *penance, fasts and alms*. Now we have only to consider what a multitude of baptized persons, both in the Roman church and in others, give no manner of evidence that they ever possessed true piety, to perceive what a soul-destroying delusion this must be.

And in the case of adults, the error is, if possible, still more delusive. Suppose an unbaptized adult to seek direction of a Papist as to what he must do to be saved ; and what would be the direction according to these decisions ? He is told in the first place, to *prepare himself* to the work of justification, and that good works performed before this change, have the merit of congruity in them, and are not of the na-

ture of sin. He is now told to *believe* ; but belief, in the Catholic sense of the word, is to believe in all which the church teaches, as well as in Christ, and this he now resolves to do. He is *baptized* accordingly—baptism is the *opus operatum*, or regeneration and justification both. He now has these ; and engaging to continue in them, he is in a state of salvation. Suppose he lapses afterwards, he does not wholly lose grace, unless it be by infidelity or mortal sin ; and then he is to be restored by penance and with priestly absolution.

He is never admonished that he may have deceived himself with respect to the reality of his first hope : he is never to have original depravity brought before him, since that was “uprooted” by baptism : he is never told to *repent*, in the proper sense of the word. He is only to be excited to good works, and then is told to own the merit of condignity in them, and that they entitle him to eternal life.

Not a word in all this of “looking to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world”—nothing of “Christ crucified”—nothing of that “*only* foundation which is laid, or can be laid, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” If such be not “another gospel,” we cannot well conceive what would be, nor what could more effectually delude sinners, and “weave the winding-sheet of souls.”

If the system be preached according to these dogmas (and they are dogmas, let it be remembered, which are fortified with many *anathemas*, and can never be changed) we might expect a palpable ignorance among its subjects of the true and only way of salvation.

II. THAT SUCH IS THE PREACHING OF PAPACY, is what we shall next attempt to show. Our specimens for this purpose, will be taken from their best preachers, and however difficult it may be to prove a negative, the reasoning will, we trust, be satisfactory, since if salvation by Christ do not appear in these, it is fair to infer that it does not belong to their system.

We shall freely admit here with regard to some of these preachers, that there is much to approve in their discourses. As models of pulpit eloquence, and for pungent and faithful appeals to the consciences of their hearers, we do not know that *Bordaleau*, *Bossuet*, and *Massilon*, have ever been surpassed. If these men, then, in their best efforts, and on occasions which seemed most imperiously to demand an

exhibition of the way of a sinner's hope, have universally failed to present it, it is fair to conclude that they were themselves in error, and attached to a spurious faith.

We cite from Bordaleau's sermon *on preparation for death*. On so serious a subject, there is naturally expected not only the practical precepts of the spiritual life, but the foundation of it in a clear and prominent exhibition of the method of salvation by Jesus Christ. And yet if we mistake not, there is an entire omission of this part of the subject. All is disciplinary and superstructive, and not even the *name of Christ* is introduced with reference to the sinner's hope, in this able, and in many respects, excellent discourse.

The preacher answers the question, *how shall we be prepared for death?* by directing us to *these things*—"a persuasion of the certainty of death, watchfulness against being surprised by death, and that practical acquaintance with death, which consists in dying daily to the world, or making of life itself, *a continual apprenticeship to death*." [Bordaleau's Sermons, Flint's Translation, p. 122.]

In the carrying out of these positions, we find, among others, the following representations: "Who would think, my hearers, that we could find a preservative against being surprised by death? Yet this important secret the Saviour of the world has taken care to teach us; and the secret is contained in one word, *watch*." [p. 131.] Again, "This is what constituted the difference between the wise virgins and the foolish, who are spoken of in the gospel; the one were no better instructed than the other, as to the moment when the bridegroom would come; but in this uncertainty, the former had the precaution to keep their lamps always burning; whereas the latter slept, and during sleep, suffered their lamps to go out." (p. 133.)

Now we had always supposed that the principal difference in the two cases, was, that "they who were foolish took their lamps, but took no oil in them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

But, says our author, "a third particular included in necessary watchfulness is, that we frequently *look into ourselves*, and *examine our situation*, that we may thoroughly *know ourselves*." This is very well, and we might be ready to expect that something discriminating was about to be exhibited; but alas! we find that the author's

view of *self-examination* is "frequent confessions of sin," "in holy retirement," "in useful reading, in charity and prayer, and all exercises of Christian piety." (p. 136.)

In another place this mode of life is called "a voluntary mortification." It is acknowledged to be "a melancholy life;" but "let it be so; it will be followed by a death full of consolation—the death of the righteous." (p. 144.) And here is the remedy for the greatest of all natural evils: this it is, to be prepared for death, according to the gifted and eloquent preacher of Louis XIV.

From *Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux*, we shall make but a single extract. On occasion of the *Profession of Madame Vallière*, this dignitary gave a splendid sermon from the text, "And he that sat upon the throne said, behold I make all things new!" In this discourse the professed object is, to exhibit *the method of the soul's return to God* from the path of its original and actual alienation. Having drawn, with a masterly hand, the previous state of depravity, guilt, and misery, it proposes the *remedy* in the following remarkable language: "She (the soul) embraces all the mortifications: she gives to the body scanty and unpleasant food, and to the end that nature may be satisfied therewith, she waits until hunger shall render it tolerable: she makes her bed upon the bare ground: she practices psalmody in the night-season, and those labours by day, which bring light slumbers to the weary body—but slumbers which do not make weary the spirit, or scarcely interrupt its holy acts: and she denies herself pleasures, even the most innocent: and thus all the functions of nature become at length the operations of grace."* [*Oraisons funébres de Bossuet*, p. 289.]

Of *Massillon*, the last of these preachers whom we shall quote at present, we hardly know how to speak in terms of just appreciation. So far as our acquaintance with French preachers of the Catholic faith extends, he appears decidedly the best of them all. Massillon is not only gifted, erudite, and surpassingly eloquent, but for fidelity, and directness of appeal to the heart, as well as for address, and

* As a specimen of style, and for confirmation of the same sentiment, we offer the following from the original: "The soul—decue par sa liberté, dont elle a fait un mauvais usage, elle songe à la contraindre de toutes parts des grilles affreuses, une retraite profonde, une cloiture impenetrable: ainsi reserrée de toutes parts, elle ne peut plus respirer que du côté de ciel: elle se donne donc en proie à l'amour divin: elle rappelle sa connoissance et son amour à son usage primitif." *Ibid.*

graphic delineations of human passions, we do not hesitate to say, that he might profitably be studied by any Protestant preacher.

Indeed it has often seemed marvellous to us, while reading this man, that he *could have missed* exhibiting the true method of a sinner's hope ;—that when he had so laid open the sinner's heart, and cast down and rendered abhorrent, even to his own perceptions, the vile transgressor, he should not then have directed him to true repentance and faith in the Lamb of God, instead of sending him to the performance of *sacramental penance, macerations, fasts, and retreats* ! Yet this is the constantly occurring error of this highly accomplished man. He speaks of the grand deficiency of the dying sinner as being "*his destitution of good works*" (*vide de bonnes œuvres*). The poor man, tossed and tormented upon a dying bed, despairs because "*he has so abused his mercies, and amassed no treasure of merit, by the practice of virtue.*"—And what is that in which the saint differs from the dying sinner, and the recollection of which makes soft *his* bed of death ? It is thus represented ; "*He has long since been preparing himself for this solemn moment : he has amassed, by the practice of Christian works, a treasure of righteousness, that he may not appear empty handed [vide] before his Judge.*" Again ; "*I say that nothing is more consoling for the dying saint, than the remembrance of the past—of his sufferings, his macerations, his self-renuncements, and all those trials in which he has been found faithful.*" [*Œuvres de Massillon, Tom. I. Paris, 1833, p. 18.*]

A further consolation of the dying Christian is "*the remembrance of the violence he has done himself out of regard to God :*" "*He comprehends now all the merit of penitence, and how madly unbelieving men have refused those momentary restraints of piety, which would have been repaid with happiness unmeasured and without end.*" [*Ibid.*]

The preacher speaks in another place, of "*relapses expiated by the groans of penitence*" (*des chutes expiées par les gémissements de la penitence*), of "*faith received in baptism,*" and of the *sacrament of fasts* "*as always connected with salvation*" [*c'est toujours un commencement de salut : —c'est s'unir avec les justes.*"]—p. 129].

Finally his *theory* is consistent with all this, and per-

fectly conformed to the standards of his church. "There are," says he, "but two ways of securing salvation: it is either by preserving that innocence which was conferred by the church in baptism, or, having lost this, to regain it by the sacrament of penance. Now to remain innocent is a privilege aspired to but by few: and where then are those, who expiate their crimes by tears and macerations—where are they?" [p. 303.]

But enough has been quoted—enough to show, beyond all question, that this, in many respects, excellent preacher, does entirely fail to exhibit the true method of salvation, and does awfully mislead the mind of the anxious sinner. He does indeed sometimes speak of the merits of Christ: but it is only as preparatory to the merit of good works: he does sometimes admit the necessity of possessing a new moral nature; but the question is, how does he direct men to attain to this? It is by *baptism*, by *penance*, by *macerations*, by *fasts and prayers*, and *retreats*; never by simple faith working by love: never does he direct men to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" never does he say in the name of the Lord, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else."

It must be "another gospel" which is thus preached; and we should expect that men accustomed to hear such directions only, and from those in whom they place unqualified confidence, would remain deplorably ignorant of the way of salvation, and seldom, if ever, be truly converted. How much more then is this deplorable result to be feared when we add,

III. THE CEREMONIES and *imposing rites*, for which this faith is distinguished! We had intended to show what these rites and ceremonies are; but our proposed limits will not permit this, in detail: nor, on reflection, does it appear to be necessary, as they are not denied, but rather gloried in by the Romanist himself. That these externals of their system are both more numerous and of a more imposing character, than those of any other church—perhaps not excepting the ancient Jewish—is a matter of notoriety and need not here be proved.

Now we all know what human nature is in reference to externals in religion. We know that while they are important to a certain extent, they are not to every extent, and that it is constantly necessary to guard here against a most dan-

gerous extreme. The senses are an inlet to knowledge and feeling; but cannot of themselves originate knowledge or spiritual emotions. And there is the greater fear of delusion here, from the known disposition of man to rest in the sensuous, rather than seek the spiritual, in matters of experimental religion. How is it probable then—we had almost said how is it *possible*, that a poor, ignorant Catholic should escape this error? With a faith so erroneous and unscriptural—under preaching so *defective*, not to say worse of it—and surrounded now, weekly and daily, with ceremonies that address themselves so imposingly to his senses, would it not be next to a miracle, if he did not rest in these, or in the mere animal impressions which they are calculated to make? Let us look at his case. He sees before him a gorgeous temple, where all the power of architecture, sculpture and painting, seems to have been exhausted to fascinate the eye. Pictures and images almost without number are before him, and offered as vehicles at least of the blessings he comes to seek. He beholds a consecrated priesthood, habited in gorgeous and antiquated attire. He listens to a service in an unknown and venerated tongue. Mysterious movements and unexplained airs mingle and give a ghostly influence to the whole service. The smoke of incense ascends: candles are burned at noon-day: masses are said for the living and the dead: and music that is almost unearthly resounds “through long drawn aisles.” The poor worshipper is taught to consider the very ground on which he stands as holy—that *relics* have consecrated it, or miracles been wrought there by their efficacy. At certain seasons, splendid processions are made, and set off with all the stirring accompaniments, of crosses and holy sprinklings, of banners and martial music, of bayonets and plumes, and the thunder of artillery. He is taught to believe in no less than seven sacraments, all of which confer grace. He invokes the saints: he adores the virgin Mary: he relies on indulgences to abate punishment. “He has no doubt of the efficacy of priestly absolution; and should he be so unhappy as to die in sin after all, he fully expects that all but infidelity and mortal sins, will be purged away by the fires of purgatory, or removed by the masses secured to be said for his soul.” And now we ask, how it is supposable, that the mind of such a worshipper should not be turned away from the faith of the gospel, and dreadfully deluded

as to the only way of salvation? Whether it invariably is so, and that there is no true piety in these deluded votaries, we do not say; and it is well that it is not ours to determine. We are speaking only of tendencies and probabilities. In our view, this system is chargeable with this tendency. And there seems more reason to regard it as unfit for exhibition to the minds of men now, than the system of Jewish sacrifices, with all the imperfections of its latest state.

It is no answer to be told here, that Christ is exhibited in these ceremonies. We know that a *sculptured* or a *painted* Christ is exhibited, but not the doctrine of Christ. It is in vain to say that all these may be so explained as to *lead* to Christ: but the charge is, that they are *not* so explained, and that they cannot be in consistency with established dogmas. We should expect, and we do fear, that the far greater proportion of worshippers under the varied influences of this whole system, will be found ignorant of the merits of Christ, and trusting to a fatal delusion.

We have only to say a word in conclusion. We are aware that much of our argument has been of the nature of proving a negative, inasmuch as we have aimed to exhibit the system of Romanism more in its *defects*, than in its transgressions. If we have failed or erred here, we shall willingly be corrected. We are conscious of no unfriendly feelings to any persons holding this faith: and if we have failed in our authorities, or stated any thing unfairly, if it can be shown that Catholics *do* preach Christ crucified, or if they will now do so, in spite of their dogmas, or by reforming them, we shall willingly retract and hail them as fellow Christians.

With Protestants our object has been of a different nature. It was to show what we consider the principal error of Romanism—its *relation to justification*. It was to guard against its detractive, rather than its aggressive influence; and to indicate, if it is to be assailed, the *point d'appui*, so to speak, by which it can best be done.

ART. IX.—ON THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE LUTHERAN
AND CALVINISTIC THEORIES ON THE DOCTRINE OF
ELECTION.

By DR. F. SCHLEIERMACHER.

Translated from the German, with an Introductory Notice, by THE EDITOR.

THE following treatise, which is regarded as among the ablest and most effective of the productions of its author, was first published in 1819, as the Introductory Article of the "Theologische Zeitschrift," a journal conducted jointly by Schleiermacher, De Wette and Lücke. The close of this journal was signalized by the equally celebrated treatise on the "Contrast between the Athanasian and Sabellian Theories of the Trinity," which has been translated by Prof. Stuart, and presented to the public in the pages of the Biblical Repository. The first article will be found, we think, equally deserving a place in our language with the last. The subject of it relates more directly to the questions about which the church is now agitated; and the treatment of this subject exhibits at least in an equal degree that extent of learning, that accuracy of discrimination, that strength, consistency, and originality of thought, so conspicuous in the last named treatise, and indeed in all the productions of this author.

This treatise on the doctrine of Election was called forth by the attempt to effect an union between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches—an object which Schleiermacher, in common with the greatest and best men of both churches, ardently desired and laboured to promote. The doctrine of Election, as is well known, was one of the few points on which the two churches had divided, and with regard to which a bitter controversy had prevailed between them. The Lutheran church had adopted the theory, that Election proceeds on the ground of faith foreseen; the Calvinistic, that it is irrespective of faith, or of any thing good in man, and from the mere good pleasure of God. With regard to these different theories, Schleiermacher takes the ground, that they are by no means such as to authorize an ecclesiastical separation between those who hold them, or to forbid their cordial reunion. And yet he maintains that they are far from being unimportant either in themselves or in their

bearing on the whole Christian system, and that therefore they deserve a careful reconsideration. In inviting a new discussion, he distinctly avows his belief of the Calvinistic theory, and points out the inconsistency of the Lutheran theory with a doctrine regarded by the Articles and the theologians of his own church as fundamental, viz., *the doctrine of man's entire inability to all goodness*. To show the indissoluble connexion between this doctrine and the Calvinistic theory of Election, is the principal object of that portion of this treatise contained in the present number.

This connexion had been previously seen and acknowledged by Dr. Bretschneider in his "Aphorisms." And he knew of no way of escaping from the "decretum horrible" of Calvin, but to deny the doctrine of man's entire inability, of which it seemed to be a necessary inference. The great body of Lutheran theologians could not however, as Dr. Schleiermacher supposes, ever be brought to abandon a doctrine so fundamental, in their estimation, as the inability of man, in his natural state, to do any thing good; and hence had no alternative left, but to join with him in embracing the rigid theory of Augustin and Calvin, respecting the unconditionality of the divine decree of Election.

The boldness of the position here taken by Schleiermacher, in face of the prejudices of all his theological associates, the able manner in which he maintains his ground, together with the influence of his name, conspired to produce a great sensation throughout the Lutheran Church. Numerous replies from the most distinguished Lutheran theologians shortly appeared, in which an attempt was made to vindicate the consistency of the Lutheran Articles. Their inconsistency, however, is fully conceded to Schleiermacher by De Wette, in a reply to this treatise published in the next number of the same periodical, as will be seen by extracts from it which will be subjoined in a note.

Dr. Lücke remarks, in his Recollections of Schleiermacher, that to most persons the publication of this treatise appeared to be ill-timed, since, by defending the logical consistency of the Augustinian and Calvinistic doctrine of Election, it seemed adapted rather to injure, than to promote the union of the two evangelical confessions. "But when I suggested this to him," says Lücke, "he explained his purpose of furthering this union by introducing a fresh discussion on a point which, to a superficial view, might seem

already exhausted, but which, if the union was to be completed with reference to the developement of a scientific theology, must sooner or later be made a question." "It is the merit of this treatise," as Lücke proceeds to say, "that it has excited a more thorough and accurate discussion of this difficult problem, and has given a new direction to the doctrinal discussions on this subject."

The argument contained in this article, though particularly appropriate to those to whom it was originally addressed, will be found not inapplicable to several portions of our own theological public. We shall here speak of the application of only that part of the whole argument which is contained in the first portion of the treatise, and published in the present number. This argument, as has been before said, relates to the inherent connexion which subsists between the doctrines of the entire inability of man and absolute election. Now this connexion deserves to be particularly considered by two classes belonging to the American Church. The one hold to the entire inability of man, and yet, like the great body of the Lutherans, deny the doctrine of unconditional decrees, which, according to our author, necessarily flows from it. The other class subscribe to our Calvinistic Confessions, and to the doctrine of unconditional Election among the rest, and yet deny the entire inability of man—the doctrine upon which, according to Schleiermacher, the whole Calvinistic system rests.

To the former class belong the followers of Wesley in the Methodist connexion, and those of the Episcopal Church who adopt the Arminian construction of their Articles. And it would seem, that the charge of inconsistency, here proved against the Lutherans, might for the same reasons, be substantiated against this whole class, since they agree in admitting the doctrine of inability, and in rejecting the doctrine of absolute Election. This inconsistency is not, indeed, chargeable upon the Articles of the Episcopal Church, as it is upon the Lutheran symbols; since the Calvinistic theory of Election, though not distinctly expressed, is yet, according to general consent, allowed by the former, while in the latter it is decidedly condemned. But the charge of inconsistency will not be easily escaped by those who, in their creed and litany, devoutly acknowledge the entire inability of man, and his native repugnance to holiness, and then, in their preaching and writing, reject and denounce the doctrine of uncon-

ditional Election. It is a representation often made,* that those divines of the Episcopal Church who have adopted the doctrine of absolute decrees, have received it from the dark and troubled stream of the scholastic theology; while those who have rejected it, have been happily emancipated from the prescriptive dogmas and cobweb subtleties of the schoolmen. But in the light of the reasoning of this treatise, we cannot help regarding the former as having drawn it, as a necessary inference, from those doctrinal premises which lie deeply in the very bosom of their own church, and the latter, in rejecting it, as having broken stronger chains than the cobweb subtleties of Aquinas—the chains of strict consistency of theological system.

Assenting, however, as we most cordially do to the opinion of our author, that these theories, however different they may be, are not a sufficient ground for ecclesiastical separation, we cannot but approve that indeterminateness of the Articles of the English Church on this subject, which allows them to be honestly subscribed by those who lean either to a Calvinistic or an Arminian construction of the Christian system. No principle appears to us more obvious or more important, than that public Articles, which are to be made the basis and the terms of Christian fellowship, should be so simply framed as to secure the assent of all evangelical Christians, however weak or imperfect they may be in the faith of the gospel. When creeds established for general use descend, as they often do, to the decision of points which always have been, and probably ever will be disputed, they lay a snare for the consciences of those who may dissent from them in these respects, and who yet may be tempted by considerations of prudence or convenience to subscribe them. They also place those who may more rigidly adopt them, under a conscientious necessity of excluding or expelling from their communion those who may dissent from these established theories, though they may yet be regarded as, in general, evangelical believers,—a process which must always prove a fruitful source of division within the church, and bring upon it from without the reproach of sectarian bigotry and exclusiveness. The interests of peace and of truth would, as we believe, be equally consulted by

* We have seen it recently repeated in the Churchman, in an ingenious attempt to identify Calvinism and Popery.

leaving the more precise determination of the different articles of the Christian faith to individual ministers and teachers, with their respective followers and schools, between whom a free discussion of these points should be allowed and even encouraged. Were the terrors of excision now impending over the course of theological discussion thus removed, its bitterness and violence would be greatly diminished. Nor could sound believers in the orthodox faith have any thing to fear from the most free and unembarrassed investigation.

There is a second class to whom, as has been intimated, the argument of this article applies,—those who subscribe to the Calvinistic Confessions of the Presbyterian and most of the Congregational Churches, and to the doctrine of absolute decrees among the rest, and yet deny the doctrine of man's entire native inability to obey the divine law,—a case exactly the reverse of that which we have just mentioned, and of that which Schleiermacher had in view. Such a class there is in New-England and in portions of the Presbyterian Church. We do not refer to those who have contended for the *natural ability* of man in the sense of Edwards and Bellamy, and also of Watts and Fuller. By this doctrine they have meant to ascribe to man only such natural powers of intelligence and will as are necessary to constitute him a reasonable being and a moral agent, which have never been denied to man by those who have contended most strenuously for his entire inability. They have still held, in common with the great body of orthodox churches in every age, that these original powers of the mind are brought into such blindness and enslavement by the native depravity of the heart, that man is morally unable to obey the divine law, and absolutely dependent on divine grace for holiness.

But among those who speak of the *natural ability* of man, there are some of late years who use this phraseology in a sense widely different, and far more extensive than that originally intended. They regard man's natural ability as so great, that while they concede it never does, they contend it easily may, prevail over our moral inability. In other and plainer language, they represent the perverse desires of man's heart as subject to the controul of his voluntary power, so that he may turn them whithersoever he will. In so doing, while they aim to enhance the sense of obligation, they materially impair the sense of dependence; and

while they allow that divine grace is actually vouchsafed in man's conversion, they entirely remove the *necessity* for it.

To those who thus virtually deny our entire inability and absolute dependence on divine grace, it will appear from this treatise, that they gratuitously surrender a doctrine, which is regarded by the great body of the evangelical church as fundamental in their whole system, and which, if we may credit the testimony of Schleiermacher, the Lutheran Church could never be induced to abandon even to escape the inevitable inference of unconditional election. It will appear, too, that while they separate themselves in this important point from those with whom they agree in the general system of faith, they associate themselves with Bretschneider and the great body of the German Rationalists, who reject the doctrine of our entire natural inability principally for the sake of subverting the doctrine of unconditional Election, and the other Calvinistic doctrines with which it is connected. These facts may well suggest the inquiry, whether it is possible for any persons to persist in denying man's entire inability, and yet continue to believe the characteristic articles of the evangelical system of faith? All the doctrines of grace, as well as that of unconditional decrees, are inferred so directly from the doctrine of man's entire inability, and stand so indissolubly connected with it, that it is difficult to see how the latter can be rejected, and the former consistently and intelligently retained. It is indeed already apparent, that those who deny the entire inability of man to obey the divine law, are not long in showing very considerable departures in other respects, from the standard of Calvinistic orthodoxy.

With regard to Schleiermacher himself, we will only add a word which may enable the reader more fully to appreciate the importance of the following document. The highest place among the theologians of his age, eminently fertile as it has been in great minds, has been cheerfully and universally conceded to him. At his death, Neander remarked to his auditory, "A man has been taken away, from whom a new epoch in theology will hereafter be dated."

This epoch is not marked by the rejection of any of the fundamental doctrines long received in the church, nor by the discovery of any doctrines never before known: on the contrary, the whole system of Schleiermacher led him to look with suspicion on whatever in religion bore the stamp

of novelty, and to regard the ancient if not universal belief of the Church, as almost essential to the proof of any doctrine. The epoch introduced by him is rather distinguished by the more thorough, philosophic, and vital apprehension of the established creed of the Church. He had deeply sympathized with the philosophic and scientific movement of his times, had become imbued with its spirit, and had reaped its best fruits. But instead of applying his mind, thus armed and stored with modern learning, to the work of overthrowing the established doctrines of the Christian faith,—the proud but fruitless attempt of the Rationalist theologians of his country,—he devoted himself to the more pious and worthy cause of showing their consistency with the highest progress of philosophy and science, and thus endeavoured to settle them anew and more firmly in the convictions of an age deeply infected with religious skepticism. He had been educated in the bosom of the Moravian Church, and there acquired a love and veneration for the fundamental principles of Christianity, which controuled his mind in every subsequent period, and brought him back from the endless mazes of speculation, in which so many of his contemporaries were lost, to the sure basis of a positive and historical religion. Such is his own confession: "Piety is the motherly bosom, in whose holy seclusion my youthful life was nourished and prepared for the world which had not yet opened upon it; my spirit breathed its atmosphere before it found its appropriate sphere in science and the experience of life; it aided me when I began to examine the faith which I had inherited, and to purify my thoughts and feelings from the ruins of antiquity; it remained with me when the God and the immortality of my childish conceptions disappeared before the eye of doubt."

It was thus that Schleiermacher was enabled not only to withstand the seductive power of philosophy, but to bring it into subordination to his Christian faith. He thus accomplished in himself the cordial alliance and union of Reason and Revelation, and begun in his own person that transition, which has since become so general in the Lutheran Church, from a negative Rationalism to a positive though scientific supranaturalism.

The distinguishing peculiarity of the theological system of Schleiermacher consists in his making subjective Christianity, or the pious consciousness of the Christian, the ob-

ject of examination, and the source from which the doctrines of the Christian system are evolved. It will be seen, however, from this treatise, that while he took his stand on the ground of experience, he was far from neglecting the objective truths of divine Revelation. It is well remarked by Dr. Twesten, that Schleiermacher, in recalling the doctrines of faith to the facts of Christian consciousness, as their primary foundation and genuine object, has not only restored to them their independence, but secured faith itself from the attacks of a science which is ignorant of its legitimate boundaries. And Dr. Lücke, in his *Recollections of Schleiermacher*, speaks of the great influence of his system in reinstating the objective truths of the Christian faith in scientific minds, although this was not its immediate object.

It would be wrong, however, to infer from what has now been said, that Schleiermacher is to be regarded as a believer in the entire sum of doctrines usually considered evangelical, and as an adequate expounder of the Christian faith. His principles led him to reject some plain doctrines of the Bible, because they were not easily deduced from Christian consciousness, and also to believe in some which have no scriptural warrant, because apparently consonant with the feelings of the pious heart. Examples of errors which have resulted from urging his method too far, will appear to the reader in the latter portion of this Essay, which we hope to be able to present to him in the following Number of the Review.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.

PART I.

Connection of the Calvinistic Theory of Election with the Doctrine of man's entire inability.

THE strict construction of the doctrine of Election which it has been common for a long time to designate by the term *Unconditional Divine Decrees*, was first advocated by Augustine, and again at last by Calvin. They both felt themselves compelled by the clearest declarations of Scripture

to adopt this construction in preference to any other, and at the same time showed, that any departure from it gave rise to conceptions of the divine nature inconsistent with those derived most purely from reason. Still, however, as is well known, this construction of the doctrine has gained a permanent belief only in a comparatively small part of the Christian Church. By the greater part of the Church it has been rejected, after repeated conflicts, and in every instance on the very ground, that it is equally opposed to clear declarations of Scripture and to sound reason.

This result has always appeared surprising to me, ever since I have been in a state to employ myself about such subjects, because I have never found any one on the opposite side who has evinced a more unlimited reverence for the Scriptures, than these two men. Even to the great Luther himself, I cannot concede any superiority to Calvin in this respect. In cases where they differ from each other in interpretation, the one still adheres as firmly to Scripture as the other; and the only question between them respects the different ways of reconciling texts which are apparently discrepant.—Quite as little could I affirm, that any one of the most decided opponents of this view has excelled the holy Augustine or the good Calvin in strict connexion of thought. And on this account it has seemed improbable to me, that their declarations should stand in open contradiction with other universal truths, to which they themselves had assented—a contradiction which they themselves had not perceived, but which must first be pointed out to them by their opponents.

Nor have I been able fully to acquiesce in that excuse which has so often been made for them, that an excessive zeal in the controversy against Pelagius first drew saint Augustine into this unscriptural and irrational opinion, and that Calvin then hung upon this chain as one of its last links, while Luther and his followers happily extricated themselves from the net. For it could never appear to me as if this doctrine first occurred to Augustin during the Pelagian controversy, or originated from it; but rather as if it belonged essentially to those original convictions which compelled him to enter into this controversy, and animated him while it lasted. And I shall be surprised, if this very point is not placed in a clear light by the new historical and critical exhibitions of this controversy, and of the whole

period during which it was conducted, which we are now expecting from two excellent men.* As to Calvin, he is indeed unquestionably a disciple of Augustine, as far as one distinguished man can ever be called the disciple of another;

* Dr. Wiggers of Rostock and Prof. Twesten of Kiel.

[Nothing is more common, than for those who prefer the more youthful, to the more mature opinions of Augustine, to represent the change of his doctrinal creed as having resulted from his controversy with Pelagius. Thus Priestly represents, in his "History of the Corruptions of Christianity" (Vol. I. part 3. sec. 1), that, "before Augustine engaged in his controversy with Pelagius, he held the same opinion concerning free will with the rest of the Fathers." And he quotes Augustine's retraction of his earlier opinions about *faith*, as having taken place in consequence of the Pelagian controversies. And our learned friend, the Editor of the *Churchman*, whom we are sorry to find in such company in this matter, repeats this charge, in his Article on "Calvinism and Popery," to which we have before referred. He represents the faith of Augustine as having been simple and unvitiated on this point, "until his zeal, in his celebrated controversy with Pelagius, destroyed the balance of his mind, and left him to fall into the adoption of his peculiar system."

Whether these representations are true or false, does not materially affect the question at issue between the disciples of Augustine and their opponents. The great inquiry is, whether his doctrines are true, and not how he came by them. Still the repute of opinions, as well as of persons, is not a little affected in the estimation of the world, by their *genealogy*. It may be well, therefore, to adduce here such evidence as we may possess, to confirm the impression of Schleiermacher, that the high points of the Augustinian system, were not produced from the heat and blindness of controversy, but from the depths of Christian consciousness, and the efforts of reason after thorough-going consistency.

The work of Dr. Wiggers, to which Schleiermacher here refers, as likely to sustain his impressions on this point, has been received in this country, and will probably be soon translated. It is not, however, now at hand, and cannot therefore be adduced in evidence on this point.

In the brief, but admirable developement of Pelagianism given by Dr. Twesten in his "Dogmatik," (Vol. I. pp. 142, &c.)—and we are not aware, that he has written any thing else on the subject to which our author could have alluded—he represents Augustine, as having proceeded in the formation of his system, and in his opposition to Pelagius, purely from the impulses of his pious feelings, and of his logical mind.

But the most satisfactory, evidence that Augustine did not derive his views of Predestination from the influence of controversy, is furnished in the Comparative View of Augustine and Pelagius given by Neander, in Vol. II. part. 3. of his General Church History, and translated in the Biblical Repository, Vol. III. p. 66. It there appears that during the first three years after his conversion, Augustine held the opinion, that men are elected of God, not indeed on the condition of good works, but on the condition of faith, and that faith is *wholly the work of man*. In a work entitled *Explicatio propositioinum quarundam de Epistola ad Romanos*, composed about the year 394, he says distinctly, *Quod credimus nostrum est*, § 60.—During this period he attempted to vindicate the character of God with respect to those persons and those nations that were not elected or called, by saying it was foreseen by him, *that they would not believe*. "Quibus omnino annuntiata non est salus, non credituros praeiebantur."

But, as is well remarked by Neander, "there was much in this scheme

but his agreement with his teacher on this point did not take place in a polemic way: for the disposition to trace back the controverted points of the Roman Church to Pelagianism is far less prominent in his writings, than in those of the other reformers; but his conviction on this point was as original as on any other point whatever.

To neither of these men, therefore, would this excuse seem to apply, and it has always been annoying to me to see it pleaded so readily in their behalf, very much certainly against their own wish and will. Were any one as thoroughly convinced as I am, that this doctrine was neither forced upon the one by controversy, nor taken on authority or repeated mechanically by the other, but that it was to both of them originally true, and an essential part of their Christian faith; he would be more cautious about repeating against them, over and over, with so much flippancy, the charge of holding an irrational and unscriptural opinion.

Indeed, when I considered that the implication of this doctrine in the great controversy between Augustine and

of doctrine which such a mind as Augustine's, striving so earnestly after consistency and unity, would be led, after a farther examination of its own Christian consciousness, and a longer study of the Holy Scriptures, to abandon as untenable."

It accordingly appears, that some time between three and four years after his conversion, and before he entered at all into controversy, his views on this great subject were materially altered through the influence of a more thorough study of the Scriptures, a deeper self-examination, and an effort after consistency of system. In a work on Predestination, written after the year 397, he himself acknowledged this change in his views, and states that it was at his entrance upon his Episcopate, that his mind began to be cleared up on this point, and that he then for the first time discovered and taught, that even the beginning of faith is the gift of God. "*Plinius sapere cæpe in mei episcopatus exordio, quando et INITIUM FIDEI DONUM DEI ESSE COGNOVI ET ASSERUI.*" *De Predest. c. 20.*

After this change in his views on this subject, he again undertook to give an explanation of the difficult texts in the ninth of Romans, being entirely dissatisfied with that which he had before given. It is now clear to him that Paul teaches a divine Election which is conditioned neither by a foreknowledge of faith, nor of good works proceeding from faith. And "the reason," says Neander, "why these texts now made so different an impression on him, is doubtless to be found in the fact, that *under the influence of his inward experience*, his whole manner of thinking had become changed."

Neander then gives it as his opinion, after a careful investigation, "that Augustine had carried through his doctrinal system in this point to all its results, at least ten years before the opinion of Pelagius had awakened any public controversy." "It cannot then be true," he says, "that he was influenced in forming his system by opposition to Pelagianism. It may be said with more truth, that Pelagius was excited and led on to bring out his doctrine by opposition to the principles of Augustine."—*Translator.*

Pelagius did not prevent the doctrine of the former from becoming the creed of the Western Church, in its effort to attain to a more strict connexion and more firm consistency of theological system; and that it was not until a later period, that, in a new developement, this single point was rejected;—when I considered this, I could not help feeling, that if only Augustine himself might have still had the advocacy of his own system, or if his later disciple (Gottschalk) had exhibited it entirely in his spirit and in the right connexion, it might have been held in honour and respect for a much longer time. And as Gottschalk was not Augustine, so neither were the later defenders of Calvin against the attacks of the Remonstrants entirely animated by his spirit.

On these accounts, I never had a heart to join with the great majority of my contemporaries in condemning the doctrine of these two men, as contrary to reason and Scripture.

Nor could I be satisfied with the construction of this doctrine which was substituted in the place of theirs. On the one hand, it seemed inclined to lead me around in a circle; and on the other, instead of a definite conception, and one which is clear to any one who will only fix his eyes steadfastly upon it, it offered me nothing but negations and limitations. And on this account, it seemed to me far more probable, that this construction was not originally conceived, than that Augustine's and Calvin's was not. This milder form of the doctrine appeared to me to be rather the product of controversy, and to suffer from that uncertainty and incompleteness, which usually belong to opinions thus originated.

It has, therefore, been to me an occasion of regret that the controversy on this subject seemed so far to have gone to sleep, and I have earnestly wished that some occasion might arise to awaken it anew. I have desired to see, whether, on a fourth trial,* this subject might not be brought to a full and satisfactory conclusion, and whether, instead of allowing these points to be overlooked or pretermitted, as seems to me to have been very generally the case in our theological public of late years, we might not, after a long

[* The previous trials alluded to are doubtless those made under Augustine, Gottschalk, and Calvin.—*Translator.*]

division, arrive at last, on a fourth attempt, at a conviction entirely cleared up.

This wish has begun to go into accomplishment since the last attempts to bring about a union between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, which must naturally call to mind the points which have been controverted between the two parties. And I myself have quite unintentionally helped to give an impulse to this matter, by affirming that this controversy belonged rather to the school, than to life, and that no respect ought to be paid to this contrast of opinions in the adjustment of ecclesiastical relations. This impulse has not remained wholly without result, since at least the "Aphorisms" of Dr. Bretschneider have an unquestionable reference to what I had said, partly as my own opinion respecting the controversy itself, and partly in justification of my course with respect to the attempted union of the churches.

But if my wishes are to be still farther accomplished, this subject must receive a far more manifold elucidation, than it ever has heretofore. And since my expectation that some advocate of the original Calvinistic or rather Augustinian doctrine would arise, is well-nigh extinguished, I shall allow myself to delay no longer, but shall proceed on the occasion which is furnished by the statement of the distinguished theologian just named. It is not my object to join issue with a man, whose learning and pre-eminent merits I acknowledge as cheerfully as any one can, and who, moreover, professes to desire as earnestly as I do, the union of the two divided parties of the church. Nor am I ambitious to deserve or to authorize the name of a bold and decided follower of Calvin, which some are so fond of giving me, I know not with what justice. My only object is to call attention to some of those points which appear to me to have been either entirely overlooked, or not sufficiently regarded in the present conduct of the controversy against Calvin.

Among the points which have not been sufficiently regarded, is that with which Dr. Bretschneider begins, when he brings into consideration the relation of the two theories respecting the doctrine of Election to the other parts of the theological system. I refer to his confession, that there is a doctrine in the system of the Lutheran Church itself, with

which the Lutheran theory of Election stands in collision ; namely, the doctrine of *the entire inability of man to improve himself*, and his natural repugnance to divine grace, which alone is able to do this. But with this doctrine, as Dr. Bretschneider confesses, the Calvinistic theory is in the most exact accordance. In this I am perfectly agreed with him, that these two theories stand in this opposite relation to the doctrine of the indispensableness of divine grace in the conversion of man. And I have always felt, that this is the very corner around which the whole controversy turns. But this has not always been made sufficiently prominent : on the contrary, it has rather been cast into the shade ; and by many it has been represented, that this doctrine respecting grace is equally consistent with both theories of the doctrine of Election. The impartiality, therefore, with which the Aphorisms confess this inconsistency, cannot be enough applauded.

It thus appears to be a matter of choice, whether one shall admit the doctrine of the indispensableness of divine grace in order to holiness, but at the same time yield his assent to the strict Calvinistic formula respecting Election ; or whether he will allow this formula with its consequences to be supplanted by the Lutheran formula, but then declare himself free from the doctrine of the indispensableness of divine grace, and stand upon his own feet.

With regard to the alternative thus proposed, Dr. Bretschneider decides very firmly and rapidly. He affirms that the Lutheran theologian must unhesitatingly surrender the doctrine respecting the necessity of grace, (which, besides, he is not able to find in the Scriptures,) because the Calvinistic theory of Election flows strictly and necessarily from it. He holds to those texts of Scripture from which it may be inferred, that man is able, even without the divine grace, if not always actually to perform that which is good, (for that he does not succeed in doing even with the divine grace,) yet, at least, to *will* to do so (does he mean truly and radically ?). He affirms, that even without any connexion with Christ, man is able to fear God, and do right. And by thus denying the premises contained in the doctrine of grace, he escapes the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination, with all its consequences, which are in his view so terrible.

It is not, however, to be believed, that all the theologians of the Lutheran Church will decide in the same way. For

many among them will say, that where Paul describes this original willing of that which is good, he describes it only as a vain and ineffectual will—a mere *wishing*—an unsatisfied longing; for he represents it as connected with the impossibility of performing, and exhibits man in this state as one who longs to be delivered from the body of this death. And when Peter exclaims, with astonishment, that whoever, even among the heathen, fears God and does righteously, is acceptable to him, he does not mean, as they think, that such an one is, in and of himself, acceptable to God, but only so far as that the Gospel should be announced to him. But these same persons will hold to those other texts which teach, that we are what we are through grace, that man must be born of the Spirit, that Christ only can deliver him from the body of death, that salvation is to be found neither in the law, nor in human nature itself, but only in Christ. These persons will therefore bear witness, that they stand in need of something more than that natural power, that knowledge of the moral law, ascribed in the Scriptures even to the heathen, and their consequent capability of being found punishable on account of their disobedience to it. Their belief is, that it is God who gives to men through Christ this something more which they need, and which they could never attain in the mere way of nature.

If now the confession of Dr. Bretschneider is just, all these persons must fall in with the Calvinistic theory, because the Lutheran theory, (unless they are willing to hold it inconsistently,) requires them to sacrifice points of faith which in their view are too precious to be surrendered. In short, all those persons who place an exclusive value upon the Redemption by Christ, and upon the operations of grace proceeding from his Spirit,—all those who hold to the peculiar, internal experiences of the Christian, will prefer to believe, in accordance with the Calvinistic theory of Election, that Christ was sent by God actually to redeem at least a part of all those who need redemption, rather than, merely for the sake of holding the opinion, that he was sent for all, and that his redemption is universal, (if indeed this opinion is not consistent with the Calvinistic theory), to adopt another theory from which it would at last follow, that Christ did indeed die for all men, but that there was no necessity for his being sent, since man can help and improve himself, and draw himself, as it were, from the ditch by his own hand.

This relation of these doctrines has not been often enough considered, and Dr. Bretschneider has done much towards securing a new and thorough investigation of the whole subject, by an impartial and unsparing exposition of this inconsistency. That the Calvinistic theory infringes upon the *universality* of the redemption, while the Lutheran establishes it, has often been averred; but it has not so often been acknowledged by the advocates of the Lutheran theory, that the Calvinistic, by way of recompence, establishes the *necessity* of the redemption, while this is infringed upon by the Lutheran.

But many will not concede this point even to Dr. Bretschneider: for then Luther and Melancthon, when they dissented from the stricter mode of statement respecting the divine Decrees must have erred, and shown themselves inconsistent; since they certainly had no thought of leaving out of their system, on this account, the doctrine of the natural inability of man to holiness.* The Lutheran Church, too, must have been entirely wrong in attempting to combine the *Declaration*, in which the Calvinistic theory of election is opposed, with the Augsburg Confession and its Vindication, in which the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian view of the self-sufficiency of man is opposed. But, (if this concession is well founded,) the *Concordia* must be truly *discors*; and it was not the excessive anti-Pelagian zeal of Augustine, which brought him to this theory; on the contrary, in this alone lay the whole ground of the controversy; and all those great teachers have been in the wrong who have regarded the anti-Pelagian Augsburg Confession as the Palladium of the Lutheran Church, and at the same time have rejected the strict Calvinistic doctrine of Election, as a dangerous doctrine, and one which they could never be brought to believe.

* If we should undertake to quote passages in proof of this, we should have to copy the whole of Luther. Let the following words from the preface to the explanation of the Epistle to the Galatians suffice. "In my heart there reigns, and always shall reign, this one Article, namely, faith in my dear Lord Christ, who is the only beginning, middle, and end of all my spiritual and divine thoughts, by day and by night." He describes Him afterwards, as the only firm rock and eternal pillar of all our salvation and blessedness, so that not by ourselves, still less by our own works and doings which are less and more worthless than ourselves, but by the help of another, the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, we are redeemed from sin, death, and the Devil, and brought to everlasting life."—Works, Vol. VIII. p. 1524, 1525.

I believe, however, that the relation of these two parts of the creed will become more obvious, if we attend a little more closely to the phraseology of the school, than Dr. Bretschneider felt it proper to do in his work intended for a wider circle.

The case, then, is strictly thus: The theory of Election held in the Lutheran Church teaches, that God has foreordained to salvation, those of whom he foresaw that they would believe:* but it is at the same time taught in the Augsburg Confession (Art. V.), "*Per Verbum donatur Spiritus sanctus, qui fidem efficit ubi et quando visum est Deo in iis qui audiunt evangelium.*" That is, [putting the two together,] God ordains from eternity those to salvation, of whom he foresees, that to them he will give the Holy Spirit, to produce faith in them. And hence, if the position is firmly held that the Holy Spirit must produce faith, the Calvinistic formula flows directly again from the Lutheran, since the Confession pretends to give us no other rule for this production of faith, than its seeming good to God—*ubi et quando visum est Deo.*

That the additional clause respecting the *hearing of the Gospel* makes but little difference, is easy to see. So far as this hearing springs from the spontaneous agency of man, it can be of no effect, for faith is produced only *ubi et quando visum est Deo.* But this spontaneous agency is inconsistent with the doctrine which ascribes to man, in the state of sin, a contempt of God (*contemptus Dei*, Apol. Conf. II.), and denies to him all power even to commence a spiritual life; for *hearing* is itself the direct opposite of this contempt, and as a spontaneous act the commencement of a spiritual

* Gerhard, Loci Theol., Tom. IV. p. 162. "*Quos ab æterno in infallibile sua notitia præcivit per evangelii auditum spiritus sancti gratia in Christum perseveranter credituros, illos elegit sive prædestinavit ad vitam æternam.*" This is not indeed so distinctly avowed in the Confessions of the Church. But a passage in the Sol. Decl. XI. p. 808, comes very near to it. "*Ut enim Deus ordinavit ut Spiritus sanctus electos per verbum vocet; atque omnes illos qui Christum vera fide amplectuntur justificet . . . ita in eodem suo consilio decrevit, quod eos qui, per verbum vocati, illud repudiant et Spiritui sancto resistunt indurare, repudiare et æternæ damnationi devovere velit.*" This passage may indeed be easily construed in accordance with the strict Augustinian theory, especially as it is affirmed in the same document (p. 806.). *Qui secundum propositum ordinati sunt ad capessendam hæreditatem, audiunt evangelium, credunt in Christum, et cet.*—But the above doctrine, which is common with the orthodox theologians of the Lutheran Church, can quite as easily be deduced from it.

state. But so far as hearing depends upon preaching, and God has not granted the preaching of the Gospel to all men,—this is regarded by the Lutheran Church as a just divine punishment for sin (Sol. Decl. XI. p. 815.), of which, however, those to whom the gospel is preached are also guilty. And if a ground for this difference of treatment was still inquired for, no other could be found, than this same foresight of that faith which was to be communicated. And hence it truly follows, as Dr. Bretschneider says, that no one who firmly adheres to the doctrine of the entire inability of man to that which is spiritual, and to the production of faith by the Holy Spirit, even if it be by means of the Word, can escape from the Calvinistic theory, if he wishes to have a complete system.

But when Dr. Bretschneider supposes that the Lutheran theologians will easily surrender the doctrine of man's entire inability, he seems to me to go much too far. On the contrary, I find this doctrine constantly recurring in all our systems of doctrine which have been held in the highest esteem, both ancient and modern. Gerhard (Loc. Theol., Tom. vii., p. 162) says *Causa efficiens principalis fidei est Deus, vel quod idem est Spiritus Sanctus*.—Reinhard (Dogmat., § 125.), *Qui SPIRITUS VI caperunt in Christum credere*.—Marheinecke, (§ 528) "Whoever unwarrantably presumes that man, in his present condition and nature, is able to begin his own conversion, or even truly to desire it, does so without any just apprehensions either of God or of man." Even De Wette allows, that the advantage of the orthodox system in this point is clear. But why should I heap up particular examples on a point which, of all others, is the most generally conceded and perfectly understood? It is more important to ascertain, how it has come to pass, that so many pious and learned men have thought themselves able to reconcile the two opinions.

For all these persons there is no other resort, than that so well known, that while faith can spring from nothing but the operation of the Divine Spirit, man is able, on his part, either to resist these influences, or to yield to them.* This resort shall be stated in the words of a highly esteemed theologian, who holds fast to the doctrine of his church—words

* Sol. Decl. p. 808. "*Hujus contemptus Verbi in causa vel prescientia vel predestinatio Dei sed perversa hominis Voluntas, qua Spiritui Sancto repugnat*."—So Gerhard, Loc. Theol., tom. iv., p. 167.

chosen with great care, and admirably calculated to leave the least possible opening through which the Calvinistic theory might enter. Storr thus remarks in his *Doctrina Christiana* (§ 116), "that pious sentiments, the rising and liveliness of which are assisted and sustained by divine aid against the tyranny of the adverse desires, are contrary neither to the scope of the truth perceived by the mind, nor to the moral nature of man, but are consentaneous with this intellectual light, and are so far in the power of man that he may either preserve, nourish, and follow them, and thus act conformably with the truth understood by him, and the connected sentiments, or he may neglect and repress these good sentiments."* Hence the divine Word, so far of course as it includes within it the power of the divine Spirit, and operates in connexion with it, excites pious emotions, and man can cherish, nourish, and follow them; and this, according to Storr, is *conversion*, for he is treating in this section of the commencement of the saving change; or, man can repress and neglect these pious emotions, and this is the easy description of impenitence. This little, it is thought, must be conceded to human freedom; and by this little man becomes the author of his evil lot, when he suppresses those emotions, while on the other hand, God alone, from whom these first emotions proceed, is the author of his happy lot, if he does not resist them.

This most easy resort was certainly had in view by Dr. Bretschneider, but is regarded by him as inadmissible, if these pious emotions must be ascribed to the divine Spirit acting through the divine Word; and as to this I am entirely of his opinion. But as this resort is commonly regarded as admissible, the matter appears to me to be deserving of farther investigation.

Some then resist or rather they neglect these pious feelings. But how does this come to pass? Our author refers us to the tyranny of the opposing appetites, and says himself, in the passage cited, "The rising and the liveliness of these pious feelings are sustained and supported by divine

* Neque pii sensus, quorum ortus atque vivacitas contra repugnantes cupiditatis tyrannidem divine ope juvatur atque defenditur a doctrinæ perceptæ argumento aut a morali natura hominis abhorrent; sed intellecte doctrina consentanei, et hactenus in hominis potestate sunt ut vel tueri, alere, sequi eos possit, atque ita doctrinæ cognita et sensibus adjunctis convenienter agat, vel bonos sensus negligere atque opprimere possit.

aid against this power." Now from these words it is not difficult to draw forth the whole Calvinistic theory. For if it is the divine help which prevents the appetites from suppressing the commencement of goodness, this suppression or neglect will follow if this divine help be withheld; and the withholding or not withholding this aid, is a matter of divine predetermination.

It is only necessary, that any one should represent to himself the different cases which may here be conceived, in order to be free from all doubt. For I ask, if a man resists the influences of the Spirit to-day, would the same man have equally resisted the same influences always? Every one will answer this question in the negative; because we know, that the appetites are not always equally inflamed. But does it depend upon man himself, whether he shall enjoy the influences of the Spirit to-day or at another time? And is not rather this favourable concurrence of a powerful divine influence with a weak resistance, so that the former may take effect, and by the time a stronger resistance occurs, may have acquired so much power that it cannot be again entirely suppressed,—is not this very thing that divine help which may be given or be withheld?

Indeed, if man possessed any thing in himself which he could bring to the aid of these influences—any thing not implicated in the nature of the desires themselves,* it must be that love to God, which is denied to the natural man by that doctrine which is here presupposed as the basis of our reasoning, and which would have been able to produce from itself those very influences of the Spirit.

But if man has in himself no such auxiliary power, it must depend at last simply upon that state of his desires in which he is made the subject of the influences of the Spirit,

* This, however, must be more than the moral feeling natural to man, which is always cited in this case, since this feeling is always inwoven in the personality of the civil society to which we belong, and of the age in which we live;—it is connected with the feeling of honour and the common spirit of the civil body; so that it is in some degree under the influence of our desires.—No theologian, proceeding from that doctrine which is here made the basis of our reasoning, can hesitate to subscribe with the most cordial conviction to what Calvin says on this point, Inst II. ch. ii. 24. and II. ch. iii. 1., in the following words: "*Ergo quicquid non est spirituale in homine, secundum eam rationem dicitur carneum. Nihil autem habemus Spiritus nisi per regenerationem. Est igitur caro quicquid habemus a natura.*"

whether he will neglect them. And if any one should still say, that he has this in his own power, he makes the mistake of ascribing to man before faith and conversion, something which, if our premises are true, he only receives with faith and through conversion, and can never give to himself.

If now we compare one man with another, and ask for anything farther than the simple fact, that the influences of the Spirit, with the divine help, have succeeded with one, and not with another; we can say nothing more in reply, than that, if any ground of this difference is to be found in man himself, it must consist in this, that appetite in general is stronger in one than in another. But in what is this difference founded? It can consist only, either in the temptations acting from without, or in the natural constitution, or in both together; and neither the one nor the other flow from within the individual man, but on the contrary come to him from God. And his constitutional powers, because they compose his personal being, and the influences of the external world, because without the divine Spirit he can only use them conformably with his constitutional powers, form together the divine predetermination respecting the fact, whether or not he shall neglect and suppress the pious feelings wrought in him by the Spirit through the Word. So that it is entirely clear, from whatever point we may go back to something *foreseen* by God, that, if we will go farther back, there will be something which God has himself *ordained* by his original creative will.

Let us now consider once more the man who has nourished and entertained these pious feelings, and so has become a convert, and ask, Whether it was the first influences proceeding from the Spirit by the Word which he so entertained? This question cannot be answered universally in the affirmative. It cannot be universally affirmed, that every man turns at the first divine impulse, or not at all. On the contrary, the confessions of all men, whether they have received or rejected the influences of grace, are full on this point, that even in their years of understanding and of moral action, they often repelled the solicitations to goodness. Suppose now that one who has since accepted the proffered grace, had died while he yet rejected it, under one of those occurrences appointed by God. And when now of two persons, the one has rejected the influences of

grace, and dies* ;—the other has also rejected them, but lives, and enjoys them again, and at last no more rejects and suppresses them ; is it not the divine predetermination which awards salvation to the one, and to the other condemnation ?†—that very predetermination which Calvin himself, when contemplating a similar case, calls a *decretum horribile*, even that *æternum Dei decretum quo apud se constitutum habuit, quid de unoquoque homine fieri vellet* ? Inst. III. xxi. 5. And when, after a single instance, or repeated cases of rejection, these calls continue to be made to the one, while the other comes into a state in which they no more reach him,—must it not be confessed, that God has made use of the aid of the Word in the requisite degree only with respect to those whom he would have to be effectually instructed,—*ergo eos omnes quos unquam erudiri cum fructu voluit, subsidium Verbi adhibuisse* ? (Inst. I. vi. 3.)

There is now, as it seems to me, but one resort more, which however will be of little avail. It is said, that the reprobation of man arises from the fact, that his neglect and resistance are greater and more unyielding than the divine grace. But how can this be the case in such a way as to be the fault of man, rather than of God ? Is not the power of passion, however tyrannical, still finite, while the power of the divine Spirit through the Word, is infinite ? And must not those especially concede the infiniteness of the power of divine grace, who insist, at all hazards, upon the universality of the redemption by Christ ? And must it not accordingly be said, that in order to bring all men to salvation, God only needed to accumulate upon each individual the influences drawn from this infinite fulness, until his resistance should cease, his freedom having been now sufficiently displayed both to himself and to the world ?—since an absolute freedom, as has been recently conceded by a celebrated theologian of the Lutheran church,‡ is inconsis-

* For this is a supposition which we must consider, since both parties affirm, at least in their public doctrine, that the state of man in eternity depends upon his state at the moment of his death.

† Augustin de corr. et gratia, § 19. *Sicut ergo coguntur fateri donum Dei esse ut finiat homo vitam istam, antequam ex bono mutetur in malum, cur autem aliis donetur, aliis non donetur ignorant ; ita donum Dei esse in bono perseverantiam, et cet.* For the same must obviously be true respecting the transition from evil to good.

‡ Ammon, *Glückwünschungsschreiben*, p. 52.

tent with the nature of a creature. And if God does not so accumulate his influences upon all persons, must it not then be said, in accordance with the doctrine that the last moment of life is decisive of man's condition, that he did not actually will to bring all men to salvation? This infinite power of divine grace, connected with that creative omnipotence, which has ordered all events of the world and all their concurrences, is what Augustine had in mind, when he used expressions like the following, which he so often did: *Non est itaque dubitandum voluntati Dei, qui in cælo et in terra omnia quæcunque voluit fecit, humanas voluntates non posse resistere, quo minus faciat ipse quod vult, quandoquidem etiam de ipsis hominum voluntatibus quod vult cum vult facit.** The same was also contemplated by Calvin, when he said, *Ideo enim censetur omnipotens quia sic omnia moderatur ut nihil nisi ejus consilio accadat, a cujus nutu pendet quidquid salutis nostra adversatur.* (Inst. I. cap. xvi. 3.)

The case then is thus with respect to this resistance, that it is itself dependent on what God has himself ordained, and that, go back as far as we may, we shall never come to any thing which God has merely foreseen, and not also foreordained.† So that Dr. Bretschneider is entirely right in saying, that there is no alternative, but either, in connexion with the doctrine respecting [the necessity of] divine grace, to adopt also the strict Augustinian doctrine of Election, or on the other hand, with Pelagius, to give up also the doctrine of grace.—Dr. Bretschneider now exhorts his fellow subscribers to the Lutheran formularies to adopt the latter course, on account of the intolerable and destructive consequences which flow from the strict doctrine of Election. He has indeed the justice to allow to Calvin and his followers, that they themselves never drew from this doctrine these frightful consequences, but on the contrary always repelled them. But he accuses them on this very account of inconsistency, because they did not see the connexion of these consequences with their principles. And he thinks that they had

* De Corr. et Gratia, 45. Comp. Euchirid., 25. "Quis porro tam impie desipiat, ut dicat Deum malas hominum voluntates quas voluerit, quando voluerit, ubi voluerit in bonum non potuisse convertere!"

† Calvin Inst. I. XVI. 2. Quisquis edoctus est Christi ore statuet quolibet eventus occulto Dei consilio gubernari. Unde sequitur providentiam in actu locari: nimis enim inscitè nugantur multi de mera præscientia.

no choice, but either to accede to these consequences, or to give up the principles of their doctrine of Election, and with them also the doctrine of divine grace.

This shows us plainly at what point the controversy has for a long time stood, and how necessary it is, if we would attain to agreement of opinion on this subject, to fight it through yet once again. The case has been this: Calvin and his followers have brought the reproach of Pelagianism against the opposite party; and they in their turn have charged Calvin with those consequences which Dr. Bretschneider here alleges against this doctrine. The Lutheran theologians have endeavoured to parry this thrust, and by artificial formulas to repel the charge of Pelagianism, Synergism, and Semipelagianism, and to authorize their rejection of the Calvinistic theory by adopting the doctrine of the mere power of resistance. If now we might regard Dr. Bretschneider as the representative of this opinion, the matter would be already adjusted, on this side, without our help. And should any be unwilling to regard him in this light, and yet not be able to answer fully what is here said in illustration of his opinion, they must still concede that the mere power of resistance must inevitably lead us, either back to the Calvinistic theory, or forward to absolute Pelagianism; if indeed we will advance into the light of a clear insight, and not hide ourselves behind obscure formulas.

And on the other side, the case has been equally unsettled. The followers of Calvin have always denied the consequences which have been charged against their doctrine. But their opponents have never allowed their denial to avail, but have persisted in demanding of them, either that they should admit these consequences, or that otherwise they should in some way modify their doctrine of Election.

But this is not a state of the matter in which men who love the truth, and have the spirit of science, can give over the discussion, if they place any value on their convictions. But either there is, on one side or the other, some mistake or sophism; and then, (since every mistake must be soon rectified, where there is good will on both parts, and the most artful sophism may be detected by one who has truth on his side, if he is not wanting in the necessary skill,) then, I say, both parties, under the conviction of having the truth on their side, must join anew in the discussion, in the hope of conducting it, with better skill, to a more satisfactory re-

sult. Or it may be, that the root of the controversy strikes down into those depths of the disposition, where repose those original principles which controversy does not reach; and then this at least will be clearly seen; so that we may know that we cannot be united, but that persons of a certain character will always hold the one opinion, and persons of a different character, the other.

On this account we wish now to see, whether we can come to as clear a result respecting the consequences which flow from the Calvinistic theory, as we have already attained respecting the relation of the Lutheran theory to the doctrine of human inability.* I prefer to begin with those

" [As was intimated in the Introductory Notice, the connexion between the Lutheran doctrine of inability, and the Calvinistic theory of absolute decrees, the point on which the whole argument here turns, has been conceded to Schleiermacher in the Reply to this treatise, written by De Wette for the number of the "Theologische Zeitschrift," immediately following this. On p. 114 of this Reply, De Wette remarks as follows:—

" Election takes place, according to the doctrine of both parties, through the free grace of God, so that all human causality is entirely excluded; and so far it may be regarded as absolute. Even faith is not to be regarded as a cause of Election, for the cause of this faith is God himself, who produces it by his Spirit in the heart, and who has brought us, by his providential government, into a condition to hear the call of mercy. In this point the Lutherans are indistinct and unsettled; since, while they allow that God does not elect *ex prævisa fide*, they still say, that he elects those of whom he foresees that they will believe in Christ, and employ the strange formula, *intuitum fidei decretum electionis ingredi*.†

" By using this formula, they perhaps mean only to affirm, that Election is accomplished only when faith is produced, and thus to establish the condition of being ordained (*ordinatum esse*). Or perhaps they may wish to connect the moral view, according to which man must himself strive and labour for faith, with the religious view, according to which faith is the work of God, so that man may not indolently lean upon God. This formula, however, must after all be regarded as untenable, and fortunately we are not bound to receive it even by the authority of the Form of Concord. The distinction between foreknowledge and foreordination must be abandoned, and the objections made to it by Calvin and after him by Schleiermacher are perfectly valid. So far, then, is the decree of Election absolute."

Shortly after (p. 119) he says on the same point, "We admit, that our being excited to faith depends alone on the operation of the divine Spirit, and we deny to man any independent concurrence, and all merit; so that we have nothing in common with Pelagius."

Again (p. 130) he says, in reply to Dr. Schultheis who had undertaken the defence of the Lutheran doctrine, in opposition to Schleiermacher, that "when he makes Election to salvation dependent on man's capacity for goodness, he cannot receive the assent of those who know, that all good in man comes from God, as our being drawn to Christ is described in Scripture as the work of God. And when he undertakes to reconcile human freedom with the divine will, by the foresight of God, he has not kept himself free from anthropopathism."—Translator.]

† Joh. Gerhard, *Loci. Theol. L. viii., c. 9, § 176.*

consequences which are said to flow from the strict doctrine of Election with respect to practical Christianity ; for if we can succeed in allaying the fears which are felt by some minds on this point, both parties will be able to proceed more impartially to the consideration of what may remain.

(To be Continued.)

ART. X.—PIETY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

The truly great
Have all one age, and from one visible space
Shed influence ! They, both in power and act,
Are permanent, and time is not with *them*,
Save as it worketh *for* them, they in it.

COLERIDGE.

No period, since the apostolic, has been more admirably marked by a happy developement of the image of Christ in the hearts and lives of his followers, than the time between the reigns of Elizabeth and George the third. It was an age prolific in intellectual and moral greatness. It was an age of vast erudition in literature, law, philosophy, and sound practical theology. Great principles sprang up and ripened into maturity. Intellects of a giant aspect arose, and brooded over the darkness and confusion of those turbulent and eventful times, and infused into the mass conservative principles, the evolution of which has caused the firm and steady strides of civilization and refinement to reach from one extremity of the continent to the other, has transformed the dreary wastes of the new world into the abode of peace, the sciences and the arts, and is now drawing the effeminate millions of Asia within the circle of their almost creative influence.

There are to every period in the history of our race, some great characteristic and distinctive habits of thought and feeling, in religion as well as in politics ; while, like specimens of statuary, each may possess much in common with the rest.

To trace out some of those traits that gave character and

individuality to the period to which allusion has been made, will be our present object.

It was an age of profound psychological research, especially in those departments of the science, in which systematic theology has its foundation. How much some may affect to despise the results of these researches, is not our concern. But we hazard nothing when we affirm, that the leading writers of this period were men trained to severe thought, the keen research, to an iron industry, lucid and masculine reasoning. They delved long in the mine, at the unshapen ore. They analyzed the laws of their own being, and hence obtained their first principles—the ultimate grounds of their conclusions on great and fundamental subjects. The deep stillness of their closets testified to their avidity for the truth. Introversion of mind became a settled habit. Laden almost to oppression with the knowledge of the ancient world, they toiled along the dark paths of mental science; and often the diligent and reflecting student will find concealed, under “a venerable rust,” the pure gold of occult truths, encased by a sound and healthful reasoning. This knowledge was not a heavy and useless mass—nay, it was pressed into the service of Christ, and made an instrument of promoting his cause in the hearts of his followers, and of suppressing infidelity and apostacy.

The age of which we speak was distinguished for the practical and theological interpretation of Scripture. This, however, was not practised to the exclusion of critical interpretation; on the contrary, there are many well executed specimens of the latter. To bring out into *real* life the ideal of the Bible, was the end of their ambition; and how far they succeeded is well known by those who are conversant with the character and writings of the holy Leighton, the godly and ardent Baxter, the great and artless Taylor, the profound and meditative Howe, Flavel, Barrow, and others of a kindred spirit. “If,” says Leighton, “some of you be careful of repeating, yet, rest not on that; if you be able to speak of it afterwards upon occasion, there is somewhat requisite beside and beyond this, to evidence that you are indeed fed by the Word, as the flock of God. As when sheep, you know, or other creatures, are nourished by their pasture, the food they have eaten appears not in the same fashion upon them, not in grass, but in growth of flesh and fleece;

thus the word would truly appear to feed you, not by the bare discoursing of the word over again, but by the temper of your spirits and actions, if in them you really grow more spiritual; if humility, self-denial, charity, and holiness, are increased in you by it; otherwise, whatsoever literal knowledge you attain, it avails nothing. Though you heard many sermons every day, and attained further light by them, and carried a plausible profession of religion, yet, unless by the Gospel you be transformed into the likeness of Christ, and grace indeed growing in you, you are but, as one says of the cypress-tree, fair and tall, but fruitless."

The labours of these men as interpreters, originated in great love and reverence for the mysterious truths of Revelation. This love and reverence for the Bible constitutes another characteristic of the piety of those times.

"They loved the Bible; it was their constant manual; and the only religious philosophy they desired to know, was that which could bear the searching, purifying scrutiny of the Word of God. Were they metaphysicians, then? Yes—but metaphysicians of an "ethereal mould." They studied to discover, and to present to the minds of others, the beautiful connexions, the more than earthly harmony, of those varied dispensations of the moral government of God, which were published successively in Eden, at Mount Sinai, and in the song of the angels to the shepherds in Bethlehem. Did they talk of the soul, and its sublime relations? They did—but it was with profound submission to the revelations of Him who made the soul. They rightly judged, that all minds must be such as they were declared to be by their Creator. Sometimes, perhaps, they launched out into deep waters beyond their soundings; but even then, their ship carried the Master, who could rebuke the surge, and return them in safety to the shore. Reason, with them, amidst all its aspirings and flights, which seemed at times scarcely human, was but the servant of revelation. If, in any instances, they followed the *ignis fatuus* of a visionary theory, it was perhaps to demonstrate to us the danger of implicit reliance on any other authority than that of the inspired volume, the "entrance" of whose "words giveth life."

These things, with others, led the way to another characteristic, which gave complexion and distinctiveness to the piety of the seventeenth century. This was an habitual

and devout meditation upon the great truths of the Holy Scriptures, in all their mysteriousness and remoteness from sense.

The advantages, or rather I would say, the absolute necessity of this habit is seen, in some measure, from the effects which flow from it.

The want of this habit of profound and pious meditation upon the truths of the Bible, and consequent reflection upon the laws of our own interior being, gives the mind a materializing tendency. It places us off from the only just ground of sound philosophical reasoning upon truths, the right apprehension of which demands such reasoning; and it deadens the noblest and purest principles within us. And, further, it generates pride and an over-estimate of personal power and worth—a contempt for the opinions of others, and a noisy and disgustful turbulence, if *our opinions* do not at once revolutionize the sacred customs and institutions of antiquity, and give a new complexion to settled habits of thought and feeling.

But let its *presence* be felt, and we have the antithesis of these intellectual and moral obliquities. Anchored where storms and winds never beat, a man accustomed to this habit, may without peril ride where the waves of the highest popular excitement foam and dash about him. The actions of such a man, on great and trying occasions, are those of moral heroism. He sees not men as trees walking, mountains inverted, and an Utopia in every evanishing cloud; but things in their true aspect; he lays hold on the springs of action; and, from the changelessness of his own principles, labours in the work of reformation with a firm and even hand, not with intermittent fits and moral paroxysms.

This habit of mind and action was beautifully exemplified by the leading divines of the seventeenth century. By this means, a peculiar gracefulness attaches itself to their writings. Each stood for the defence of truth, firm and self-collected, deeply imbued with a love of it, and a conviction of the certainty of the objects of his faith. The impress of eternity was laid on every moment. In all their religious writings, how much soever of invective they may contain, how dissonant soever their diction, *there is an undertone*, which falls sweetly and softly on the ear, as it were, the soliloquizing of a youthful seraph in a heart that inshrines the holy Jesus.

Their imaginative powers, by these employments, were enlarged, as they approached the spirit of the higher compositions of Scripture. With a sanctified imagination, restless as the wings of the four beasts the prophet saw in vision, and rich as a golden harvest, wherever they sat down to meditate, *there* sprang up a well-watered garden, lovely in its own luxuriance, through and around which strayed Arcadian airs. The cross was the centre of their souls. Nursed, like the mountain eagle, amid storms and winds, with a mental nerve rendered consistent by frequent flights around the fastnesses of Calvary, their thoughts wandered through eternity.

Imagination was not the only faculty strengthened by these habits; but the *whole* inner man was thrust forward towards that high stage of intellectual and moral existence, for which we were designed by our Creator. Dwelling in these *trans-Alpine* regions of thought, unaffected by the low sympathies of the various multitude, their faith gave a tangibleness to the most removed truths. Thus viewing the Unseen and Infinite, humility and holy artlessness characterized their whole deportment. With intellects ennobled by such an intimacy with infinite excellence, and with their vast acquisitions of all that was valuable in the men of other times, they rose over their congregations as a full cloud, and held them attentive for hours by thought "instinct with spirit."

Profundity in divine and human knowledge, without obscurity—meditation, without asceticism—spirituality, without undue mysticism—pure and simple faith, producing love, humility, and a winning artlessness—these all intermingled, constitute the ideal of a Christian philosopher and divine. And this ideal we see realized in the outlines of the Christian character before us. A holy harmony and an all-subduing mildness, (like evening flute-tones, that

"Over delicious surges sink and rise,"

in the dewy air, athwart the lashed lake, that eddies and nestles itself to rest along the strand), elevate these men to the spiritual life, and embody themselves in them into a presentiment of the angelic and heavenly.

Theirs, then, is an example worthy of imitation. For, by the same means every servant of the Lord Jesus Christ may become a scribe well instructed into the spiritual kingdom

of God—a rich house-holder, who may bring forth from his treasure things new and old, giving to every one his portion in due time. Founded on Christ and his apostles; aided and led on by those, “whose words are oracles for mankind, whose love embraces all countries, and whose voice sounds through all time;” and inspired by him, “who sendeth forth his seraphim to touch the lips of whom he pleases;” the modern defender of righteousness, may successfully breast the overwhelming tide of philosophy, falsely so called, and the torrents of misdirected zeal; although he may not remain unscathed by the shafts and vituperations of a baptized infidelity, rank with the stench of the pit, amidst those thunderings and lightnings, whirlwinds, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, in the moral world, that are to precede the battle of the great day of the Lord Almighty.

But their example is not only worthy of imitation. *It is imitable.* By employing the same means, the despondent saint may cheer his heart with a view of the calm and serene shores of the land of his future destiny—set a rich table in the dreary wilderness, intersperse the desert with cooling oases, and people it, like the dreams of Jacob in the sweet, open air of Padan-Aram, with the guardian hosts of God.

ART. XI. AN INQUIRY RESPECTING THE AGENCY SYSTEM.

THE history of our churches within the last few years, affords materials alike for philosophic reflection, and personal improvement. By its perusal in after times, it is difficult to conjecture, whether the student will be enabled to obtain a deeper knowledge of the errors of the human mind when addressing itself to religious truth; or a clearer insight into the deceitfulness of the human heart when engaged in projects for doing good. Certain it is, that they who come after us may learn from the amplest testimony of our recorded experience, that reliance can be placed on no instrumentalities save those which God has ordained; that to attempt on worldly principles to purify the church, and

to reform and evangelize the world, is to be subjected to the ultimate necessity of reconverting the converted, reforming reforms, and of retracing our steps with shame to the *good old paths*; that the formalism of orthodoxy is not more to be dreaded than the fanaticism of heresy—the narrowness of bigotry, than the intolerance of liberal views; and, to say the least, that it is quite as well to be content with the *foolishness of preaching*, as to rely on the wisdom of human schemes, and the power of human agencies, for the conversion of the world.

We propose to call the attention of our readers to a brief inquiry respecting the Agency System,—a system which, if we mistake not, originated with Voluntary societies, and which, though regarded like them as an innovation, has been generally countenanced from its seeming adaptation to useful ends. No one perhaps will deny that, at first, it might have been instrumental of good, in awakening the attention of the church to her own and the wants of the world, in unlocking the coffers, and rousing the dormant energies of Christians. And so long as agents were unobtrusive, pastors were inclined to solicit, rather than to refuse their aid; and if themselves engaged in the cause of benevolence, felt their hearts encouraged, and their hands strengthened, on listening to their scriptural and warm-hearted appeals to their people. Meeting with general favour and great success, it is not surprising that an importance was at last attached to the system, which induced many to think that they might be more useful as Agents than as Pastors, and even led some of our most prominent and influential ministers to resign their pastoral charges. Thus this System, though gradual in its rise, has at length by the patronage of churches, the accession of pastors, and the multiplication of Societies, exalted its front, and extended its branches, until it begins to cast its shadows over the length and breadth of the church. But the change which Agents have undergone by the increasing power and seeming permanency of their order; the adroitness of some, the effrontery of others, and the strenuous devotion of all to their respective objects, and in some cases without respect to the rights of churches and pastors, have not been unobserved. A feeling of resistance begins to be aroused; and already have the General Associations of Connecticut and Massachusetts passed resolutions against the unauthorized interference of Agents; while the Presbytery

of Columbia have resolved to exclude Agents from their pulpits, and the Western Missionary Society have determined on employing no *paid* Agents.

We would readily be excused from any prominent part in the conflict which must speedily ensue on this point of our modern religious economy. We are not so ignorant of human nature as not to know, that to attack a system is to incur the odium of its adherents; nor have we been so devoid of observation as not to have learnt, that men are exasperated by opposition just in proportion to the fallacy of their principles, or the morbidness of their spirit. "You feel more resentment against those who blame your mistakes," said Isocrates, in that spirit of disinterested boldness which characterized so many of the ancient orators, "than against those who lead you to commit them. But I will speak. I will prefer your safety to my own; convinced that it is the duty of those who love their country to propose not the most flattering, but the most useful advice." So in venturing, in our critical capacity, to examine the Agency System, shall we doubtless be exposed to censure which is due to those alone who palmed it on the church. But thoroughly persuaded of the self-denying duty which devolves at the present day on all who love the order of God's House, and the interests of evangelical piety, we are constrained to utter our conscientious sentiments, which, however unpalatable, if duly considered, may be salutary to no small number within the pale of our different denominations.

In our remarks, however, we disclaim all personalities. Towards many who are now engaged as Agents, we entertain sentiments of no ordinary esteem. The purity of their motives can no more be doubted, than the respectability of their characters. It was a source of deep regret to us to hear with respect to those of them who were formerly ministers, that they had resigned their pastoral charges to accept of Agencies; but it is our happiness to think that they at least, will duly weigh, and candidly acknowledge the justness of our remarks. We shall endeavour to speak of the Agency System as such; or if occasional allusion to the Agents of certain radical societies be unavoidable, it will be our aim to speak of them, as Hamlet advises Polonius to treat the players, "according to our own dignity, rather than their deserts."

Our objections to the Agency System are so various and

numerous, that we hardly know which to select first, or at what point to end.

Let it then serve as a preliminary inquiry, whether it is right for a pastor to surrender his desk every few Sabbaths, to some agent or other, who wishes to avail himself of a full attendance on the sanctuary for no other reason than to take up as large a collection as possible? whether even a pastor can himself be justified in holding up the object of some of our Societies before his people for an hour on the Sabbath, instead of the cross of Christ? Surely it is not necessary that the people should, for a single Sabbath, be deprived of the preached gospel, or that the sanctuary should be converted into a tribute-office, in order to further the ends of Christian Benevolence.

It may be asked again, whether it is right that those who have solemnly consecrated themselves to the Ministry, should engage in a work, which, while it releases them from the duties and responsibilities of the Pastoral office, employs them only in that secular department of duty, which appropriately belongs to Laymen? Even admitting that ministers of the Gospel, may be instrumental of good in collecting money for benevolent purposes, is it the way in which they should prominently exert their powers and influence? Is it the work for which they were *set apart by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*? To act stately as an Agent for the collection of money, is, we cannot but think, *to sink the minister*.

Be the claims of Voluntary societies ever so important, can they release an ordained minister from his obligation to serve the church in the regular and due administration of her ordinances? Can their claims be compared with those of the Pastoral office? Is it so, that the claims of a human institution outweigh those of a divinely appointed ministry? What though a settled minister is designated by some Voluntary society as "the best man" for promoting its object; are not the objects of the pastoral office immeasurably superiour? And is not that office far from being overfilled? Are there no destitute churches which call for the regular ministration of the Gospel?

Closely connected with this system, (perhaps, resulting from it,) is the order of itinerating Evangelists; and to their combined operation is to be attributed the frequent change of Pastors to which many of our churches have of late years

been so lamentably subject. The Agency System presents too strong a temptation to resign the Pastoral office, whenever it demands the toil of study, or the self-denial of persevering faithfulness.

In this connexion, it might also be noted, that the Agency System affords facilities for dissatisfied or ambitious ministers to obtain more eligible settlements, or more prominent pulpits. But on this, it is unnecessary to enlarge. Suffice it to say; *Qui cupit ille facit*. The people, however, we trust, will learn before long not to form too high an estimate of a man's *enduring* resources, from his few *ad captandum* sermons.

The Agency System we conceive to be hazardous to the peace and order of our churches. Some minds in every congregation, will be infected by the Agent's *one idea*, whatever it be, and be embodied into a party for its support, and undertake to stir up a hitherto peaceable and orderly society, and, according to the species of *new light* they have received, to convert their pastor into a Revivalist or Reformer—to change the communion table into a test of their respective views, and to divert the benevolence of the church from its proper channels to their specific objects. Thus, whether the Pastor succumb or not, difficulties, if not animosities, ensue; while he himself bears all the responsibility, and must either allay the ferment which the Agent produced, or resign his charge. Some churches, we have reason to think, have been so thoroughly drilled into subjection to the views of Agents, that it would be at the risk of alienating no small number of his people for the Pastor to express dissenting sentiments.

The Agency system not unfrequently subjects Pastors to interruptions and embarrassments. How often, at the present day, are ministers annoyed by the intrusion and importunities of Agents whose objects they wholly disapprove? Sometimes a Pastor finds himself beset by several Agents at the same time, each claiming that his own society, whether it be the Anti-Slavery, Moral Reform, or Te-total Temperance, is of incomparably the greatest moment, and that the Millenium will never dawn until the church is united in its support. Alas! Alas! we fear that blessed period is far distant, if its dawn await the triumph of these objects. In such a case, the minister has no alternative but either to decide against them all, at the risk of incurring their united

assault upon his character, or to assume the invidious office of giving one the preference.

The Agency System has exerted a withering influence on the stated ministrations of the pulpit. In proportion as pastors become absorbed in the different objects presented by the Agents of our various societies, they are withdrawn from those great fundamental truths of the gospel, which should constitute the principal material of their discourses. In preparing for the desk, they are apt to confine their attention to those parts of Scripture, which may be brought to bear with the most plausible weight on the specific object about which they have become so much interested. Thus the grand scope of the Bible has been overlooked, until some hearers might have been tempted to think, that according to the uniform character of their pastor's discourses, it revealed nothing but the importance of a *certain round of objects*; and that the sole duty of Christians consisted in making *special efforts*! Thus, too, have many become wearied with the monotonous ministrations of the pulpit, while others have been deprived of spiritual food.

When the usual character of the pulpit performances of Agents is taken into view, it will readily be conceded, however cordially their objects may be approved, that they are not the most happy models for pulpit eloquence. We admit that with scarce an exception, their powers of arithmetical calculation are vast; nor would some of them thank us, if we withheld a tribute to the powers of their wit; but still, their premises are not always tenable, nor do their conclusions invariably follow. Illustrations are apt to be more abundant than arguments, anecdotes than thoughts, and what is wanting in matter or spirit is elaborately supplied by tones and gestures. Indeed, it might be supposed, that some of them had been selected, like Snug in *Midsummer's Night Dream*, to whom the part of the Lion had been assigned, because their part was "nothing but roaring," and might therefore be performed *extempore*. The effect, consequently, of their frequent admission to almost every pulpit, and of their addressing so many public meetings and anniversaries, in connection with the labours of Revivalists, has necessarily been, in our opinion, to vitiate the general taste, and in too frequent instances to lower the standard of sound and permanently useful preaching.

But it is a far more serious objection to this System, that

it is fraught with danger to the divine authority and rightful influence of the pastoral office. It is no uncommon occurrence for an Agent to dictate to a pastor as to the best time, and the best mode of presenting his object; or if refused admittance to apply to the elders or members of his church; and though he may fail to convince them that they have a right to controul the pulpit, yet this does not prevent his availing himself of the facilities afforded by his Agency, for circulating whatever report he may please to the disparagement of the pastor. Thus the pastoral authority has, in some instances, been impaired, if not undermined. To the operation of this system, also, is to be attributed the fact, that the right of the pastor, to controul the religious instruction of the lambs of his flock has been called in question, and in some instances positively denied. To this, is to be traced the encroachment of females on the prerogative of public teaching. To it, also, is traceable much of the petty scandal respecting clergymen which is found in some of our falsely called religious papers; though what is too flagrantly scandalous for even these vehicles of mischief, is often conveyed to and fro, with the rapidity of *Expresses*, by the aggrieved or disaffected Agents of some of our agitating societies. The policy of the Agents of certain societies seems to have been from the first, either to flatter pastors into subservience to their views, or to revenge themselves on the refractory and independent, by aiming to render them the objects of popular odium and contempt. How common has it been for them, to circulate reports unfavourable to a minister's habits, if he has presumed to withhold his sanction from the unscriptural wine pledge—to pass sentence on the state of his heart, if he has doubted, however conscientiously, the propriety of commending the Moral Reform Society to the favour of his people.

By the last report of the American Anti-Slavery Society, how have the pastors connected with the Associations of Connecticut and Massachusetts been accused of "covert and dangerous subtlety in their mode of attack upon the rights of bleeding humanity;" of having taken a course unworthy of "honest, Christian men;" of making the ministry "the tool of selfish policy, or the ladder of ambition;" of turning it into "a fashionable conscience smother," of "shrinking from scrutiny or free discussion, and nursing their craven hearts behind the ramparts of ecclesiastical order;" and

all this, because some of the New-England clergy choose not to surrender their pulpits to itinerating Anti-Slavery Agents ! But what more is needed than *this very Report*, to prove the imperative necessity for Resolutions,—that for itinerating Agents to attempt to enlighten the churches on certain topics “without the advice and consent of pastors and ecclesiastical bodies, is an unauthorized interference with the rights, duties, and discretion of the stated ministry, dangerous to the existence of the pastoral office, and fatal to the peace and good order of the churches.”

The system, moreover, gives rise to jealousies and contentions among the Agents themselves. How can it be otherwise with respect to those agencies especially, of which *money* is the grand object ? When it is considered that the amount of their collections, or the number of their subscriptions to Society newspapers, is the criterion of their merit, it is not surprising that a struggle should sometimes ensue, in order to secure the *first* annual appeal to the purses of a congregation, or the first “round” among the people of a pastor’s charge.

The effect of this system on the Agents themselves should not be overlooked. Travelling from place to place, passing from church to church, or from house to house, they can have no time for study, and but little, if any, for that devout meditation so eminently necessary for those engaged in the public service of religion. Thus, their minds are in danger of being impoverished, and their hearts of being neglected ; while they are exposed to habits of thinking, talking, and acting, which cannot otherwise than unfit them, to a greater or less degree, for the resumption of pastoral duties, or any other quiet and stationary employment. It seems to have been in view of these tendencies of a roving and unsettled life, to unfit the mind for the spiritual service of religion, that our Saviour was so careful to enjoin upon those whom he first sent forth to publish his kingdom in Judea and Gallilee, to cultivate those habits of retirement which were compatible with the nature of their occupation,—to abide in one place in the various cities to which they went, and not to go from house to house.

These general tendencies are enhanced in some cases, by the very nature of the work in which the Agents are employed. The whole business of a certain class of Agents is confined to the collection and disbursement of money.

And it demands consideration, whether a minister's bounden preparation for the effective discharge of those solemn duties to which he has consecrated himself, so long as life or health continue, could be more endangered by daily reckoning dollars and cents in a counting-house, than in the Treasury Offices of some of our benevolent societies.

Dependent, in many cases, for their support on their success, they are exposed by this system to the temptation of resorting to questionable expedients for effecting their objects. Hence, the exaggerated statement of facts, the flattering encomiums on those who give, the denunciation of those who refuse, the ridicule which is at one time poured on the frugal, and again the judgments with which the uncompliant rich are threatened. The sentiment has been so often inculcated by zealous Agents, that men of business should make money for benevolent purposes, that Christians, under the colour of religion, have launched with worldlings into all kinds of ruinous speculation. For the sake of strengthening the power of their appeals, Agents are tempted to encourage the very dangerous policy of Societies plunging themselves deeply in debt, and then throwing the responsibility of failure on the Christian public.

No one, it seems to us, can soberly reflect on the melancholy fact, recorded in the History of the Church, that whole orders of Christian ecclesiastics were once engaged in selling indulgences to sin, and found appealing to the most sacred principles of human nature, the religious hopes and fears of men, for the merest purposes of extortion, and then reflect on the invariableness of the great principles of human nature in every age, and the certain sequence of similar effects upon similar causes; no one, we say, can duly consider this, and look without solicitude on the reflex influence of a separate ecclesiastical office of religious money-gathering upon the character of those who exercise it, however pure may be the motives with which it is originally undertaken by them, or avoid foreboding from its exercise on a large scale, the most woful corruption of Christian morals and piety.

As the time and talents of Agents are devoted to one particular thought, from the very constitution of the human mind, they are exposed, if not to monomania, at least to great extravagance. They can hardly avoid magnifying their object out of all reasonable proportions, and viewing the

whole field of truth and duty solely through the medium of their favourite idea. Hence, every sermon which they hear is deficient, however evangelical in its character, if it does not bear prominently on their object; every pastor is measured by the interest he takes in their object; and the spirituality of every church is estimated according "to what it is doing" for their respective objects! Hence, too, the infatuated impression which is fastened on their minds, that the church cannot but sustain *their* cause, however odious or disreputable it may have become, through the errors in principle and practice which they may have committed in its management; that the churches are responsible if *the amount* be not raised, or their debts be not liquidated; as if the Church of Christ could be held responsible for what private bodies, not connected with it, or responsible to it, had pledged themselves to do! or indeed for any thing which it has not itself authorized by those bodies in which it is regularly represented.

It is another tendency of this system to produce a heartless, mechanical engagement on the part of Agents in the pure and holy cause of Christian philanthropy—to place in the front ranks of the different departments of benevolent enterprise, persons who have no native impulses to the work assigned them, but are selected because, perhaps, they are out of employment, and can be easily obtained. How often have persons, who had never been known to show one spark of love to a particular department of benevolence, or to make one personal sacrifice in its behalf, been seen, on receiving an appointment to become its public agents, to kindle at once into a preternatural zeal and ardour in its behalf, and bear off triumphantly those laurels better deserved, though never coveted, by the humble and disinterested philanthropist. How easy it is for one to work himself up mechanically into a passion of benevolence or humanity, when the "motive and the cue for passion" are comprised in the liberal offer of support! Do we err in suspecting the truth and sincerity of that boastful zeal sometimes manifested by the Agents of benevolent societies? Why then, if they possess the true charity, are they so easily provoked by indifference, or so terribly exasperated by opposition to their objects? Did the love which overflowed the bosom of the meek and lowly Jesus ever distil the gall of bitterness on those who aided not or opposed his holy cause?

It may perhaps appear, at last, that some of those distinguished for the rapidity of their locomotions, and the vehemence of their appeals, and whose names are sounded far and near as the devoted friends of humanity, have all the while, and probably unconsciously to themselves, been wanting in genuine benevolence, and playing a part, which as it was assumed for an occasion, will be laid by, when that occasion is passed.

We are aware, indeed, that any office, however high or sacred, may be entered upon with base and corrupt motives ! But it is not every office which holds out such a lure to these motives, as that of a public Agent. The office of the Christian minister is admirably arranged in such a way as to discourage, rather than foster, these lower principles of action. The preacher of the gospel has not been called of man, but of God. Impelled by the convictions of his own mind and the desires of his heart, he enters the ministry from a sense of obligation to Jesus and love to the souls of his fellow men. Strangely perverted must be the mind, and deeply corrupted must be the heart of one, who could embrace the sacred calling from motives of pecuniary support or worldly ambition.

But let us glance at the effects of this system on the general mind. What must be the impressions and reflections of a serious stranger, who, whenever he enters the house of God, finds the pews filled with subscription cards, instead of Bibles and Psalm books, and his pockets beset by Agents, instead of his heart addressed by preachers of the Gospel ! To say the least, this plan of raising money every few Sabbaths for some object or other, (and they are sufficiently numerous to form an Agent's Calendar hardly less marked with *begging days*, than the Romish calendar with fasts and festivals,) is calculated to prejudice worldly men against the ministry ; to indispose them to attendance on the sanctuary ; and to provoke invidious allusions to some usages of the Roman Church, against which our Puritan fathers so strongly protested. But this plan tends, moreover, if we mistake not, to induce and nurture a false benevolence. Contributions or subscriptions are thus made under the influence of exciting statements, or oburgatory appeals, or false tests of religious character, or the hope of having it known and published how much is given, or the fear of having it discovered how little is given ; not, we

fear, spontaneously, or from principle. The exaggerated importance, too, which is attached to alms-giving tends to exalt one evidence of piety to the disparagement or neglect of another, to induce an impression that to give money is to be religious, and the reverse. Thus personal piety is endangered. It tends, too, to suggest invidious comparisons among church members; and thus brotherly love is impaired.

It can hardly be, that from time to time there should be admitted to our pulpits an order of men, each charged with the special advocacy of specific objects of moral or religious enterprise, without engendering distorted views of truth and duty, and impressing the minds of the people, according to the abilities, or popularity of the several Agents, or the different susceptibilities of their hearers, that this or that object is of an all-absorbing importance. Hence, some become all but demented on Temperance, Abolition, or Moral Reform; while others, distracted by the *last importance* which is attached to so many objects, become disgusted with all, and retire from the church where this system is supported.

In short, the necessary effect of the Agency System, is to divert the mind of the people from the general doctrines and precepts of the Bible, to the changing maxims of reformers—from the discharge of domestic duties, to an incessant attendance on meetings—from the fulfilment of sober engagements, to the support of wild measures—from the steady guidance of private judgement and individual conscience, to the ever fluctuating standard of public opinion—from the cultivation of heart religion, to outward actions and mechanical doings, and to lead them from just and sober views of truth, and from a spirit of humility and secret prayer, into all the inconsistencies of error, and all the evils of fanaticism. Human nature is ever the same. When the Abderites of old had heard one of Euripides's plays, they were seized with a mania, and we are told, that for three successive days they ran through the streets of Abdera, exclaiming, "O love! King of gods and men! great is thy power; who can resist thee?" So, is it now; but with this difference, that instead of three days, it is rather three months before the people recover (if indeed they do then, without some being permanently deranged,) from the influence of an Agent's or Evangelist's exhibitions.

The great expense involved in the support of this sys-

tem constitutes another very serious objection to it. The last Reports of our societies have not furnished us with the data to ascertain the amount of Agent's salaries, with their travelling expenses; but when the number of these societies with the number of Agents employed by each, is taken into consideration, it will at once be perceived, that no inconsiderable sum can be adequate to the support of this system. And we doubt not, that if facts were brought out, the churches would be astounded, that so great a proportion of their charities should be appropriated to the support of Agents, instead of the objects themselves for which they were contributed.

How readily might this amount of money be secured to the proper objects of benevolence, could pastors be induced themselves to present the respective claims of those societies to which they may be favourable! The system, therefore, is *unnecessary*. The preached Word inculcates the general duty of benevolence; and it belongs to the office of pastors to commend to the support and prayers of their people such particular objects of benevolence as they may deem scriptural and timely. To assert that as large an amount could not be raised by pastors, is to assert what remains to be proved; or if it have already come to this, that a pastor has not that influence over his own people which an Agent can exert, it is only another evidence that the Agency System has risen into competition with the Pastoral office, and ought therefore to be abolished.

Even admitting, however, that the same annual amount of funds for benevolent objects, could not be raised by pastors, yet, when the amount of Agent's salaries has been deducted, in all probability an equal sum would be actually appropriated to these objects. But we have not the shadow of a doubt, that the cause of benevolence would be more effectually aided; for while there would then be no need of money for supporting Agents, they themselves will have become pastors, each labouring in his respective field. Besides, were the system of agencies abolished, the pastors of our churches would feel a sense of personal obligation to these various objects, which they can never feel, so long as the present system endures.

It may be thought that the services of Agents afford great relief to pastors. But what pastor would not prefer to occupy his own desk every Sabbath in the year, rather than subject himself to those innumerable cares and difficul-

ties in the discharge of his office, which result from this System. In recompense for the few services from which he may be relieved by the labour of Agents, the pastor finds a demand created by their operations for another weekly prayer meeting, another monthly concert, where he himself is *expected* to be present; for frequent public meetings, too, which he must sanction, if not by a speech, at least by his respectful attendance. What is it to be spared a dozen sermons a year, (though some are annually relieved we have reason to think, from a score,) compared with the extra meetings, the excitements, the troubles, the formidable dangers to the ministry and the Church, consequent on the existence of this Agency System! But let the Agency System continue and extend itself, as it has done within a few years past, and pastors will be *relieved* with an emphasis. Invaded in its appropriate sphere, stripped one by one of its ancient powers, robbed of the respect and affection with which it had been regarded, and trodden into the dust, a regular ministry would be no more.

In conclusion we cannot help reflecting upon the singular phenomenon exhibited in parts of the American Church at the present moment. It is but a few generations ago that our English ancestors endured the loss of all things, rather than conform in the smallest particulars to the inventions of men in the service of God. Our Puritan fathers came to this new and inhospitable land, that they might found a church in which all things should be exactly conformed to the Word of God. A few generations have passed, and what is the spectacle now witnessed in the New-England Church, founded as has been fondly thought according to the true model of the gospel Church? How is this goodly heritage of our fathers overgrown with burdensome and expensive establishments of various kinds, all the products of human invention, for none of which can the divine authority be pleaded, and many of which are directly at variance with the institutions of Christ! How are its hedges broken down, so that it is overrun with swarms of officers and Agents, owning no allegiance to the Church, pleading for all their assumptions and doings no higher authority, than their commission from extra-ecclesiastical bodies, unknown to our primitive polity! Truly, "the boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it." We trust, however, that the old spirit of non-conformity to human in-

ventions has not become entirely extinguished, and will yet stir itself up, and enter a new and effectual protest against all those unscriptural principles and methods, which have become so deeply incorporated into the modern system of the Church!

ART. XII.—REVIEW OF DR. WOODBRIDGE ON PRACTICAL RELIGION.

Practical Religion recommended and enforced, in a series of Letters, from Epsilon to his Friend, by John Woodbridge, D. D. New-York, published by John S. Taylor, 1837.

WE are highly gratified at the appearance of this very interesting and valuable book on Practical Religion. It is a work which the wants of the Christian public have long demanded, and we are glad to see it appear executed by so able a hand. Dr. Woodbridge communicates his thoughts in a style clear, nervous, lively, and harmonious. The grand topics of doctrinal and practical Religion have been so long incorporated with all his thoughts and feelings, that he writes with an eloquence which cannot fail to make them interesting to others.

It cannot have escaped observation, that many late writers on practical religion in this country have most studiously concealed the great doctrines of religion from view; have often endeavoured to give the impression that there is no necessary or close connexion between evangelical truth and evangelical holiness. Dr. Woodbridge every where recognizes this connexion. He never shrinks from presenting even the most unpopular of these truths; and in the sense in which the church has always understood them. The reader of this work will not find himself served, in exchange for the truths of God's Word, with those crude, ill-digested notions, or that spurious sentimentality, which have marred to such an extent the works of the writers we have just mentioned. If we cannot have divine truth, we should at least be glad of common sense.

We have regretted to see in the works to which we have alluded, that such a disproportionate attention is paid to the

charitable use of money, and but a very passing notice taken of many other branches of Christian morals. One would think from the strain of some books, and the drift of much of our preaching, that the Church existed for no other purpose, than to contribute to benevolent societies, and that this was the sum of Christian duty. This certainly is the main drift of much of our religious instruction, and we have had some hints, that theology is to be so reformed, as to exclude, as antiquated and useless, all those doctrines which cannot be brought to bear upon the duty of making large contributions.

In most works on practical piety which now make their appearance, we see not only the great distinguishing doctrines of grace overlooked, but also many of the most important topics of practical religion. What do we hear now of the great duties of keeping the heart, of self-examination, of mortifying our sinful passions and affections; of the importance of the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit to enable the Christian to subdue his corruptions; the importance of the duties of the closet! If mentioned at all, these topics receive only a passing notice. To this remark the work before us is a happy exception.

We will let our author speak for himself. On the intimate and necessary connexion of doctrines with practice, he says:

"It is a very popular notion, that doctrinal opinions are of little importance. The infidel couplet of Pope, finds a response in many a heart, which has professed subjection to the Gospel:

'For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
He can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.'

But you 'have not so learned Christ.' You have been taught to set a just estimate on revealed truth; knowing that without faith it is impossible to please God; and that the objects of this faith are nothing more nor less than the facts and inculcations recorded in the Scriptures. In the same proportion as it is right or safe to deny or undervalue what the inspired volume teaches, the utility and necessity of divine revelation itself, are diminished; and encouragement is given to skepticism, and the practices to which it leads. Certain it is, if men are not blameable for their creed, they ought not to be reproached for that conduct which is its fair and necessary consequence, since it is a crime in any one to violate, in his actions, the dictates of his judgement and conscience.

All Scriptural doctrines have some relation to God, or the Saviour, or to the state and destiny of man; and cannot, therefore, as has been often alleged, be points of mere speculation, about which good men may differ without guilt or danger. Some of these doctrines are doubtless of more vital consequence than others; yet they all help to compose that scheme of

divine truth which is coherent in all its parts, and on which, as an immovable foundation, rests the whole structure of evangelical piety and morals. Without reference to what is believed, religion is like a building without a frame, or a mass of flesh without the bones to which it properly belongs, and disconnected from which it is of no value to the living animal.

"It is surely then your duty so to investigate the doctrines of the Gospel, that you will be able to understand them, and hold them without wavering. You may be accused of bigotry; but bigotry has its origin rather in pride, ignorance, or hatred of others, than in an unyielding attachment to opinions which you have found on examination to be Scriptural."

He often draws imaginary characters, which we think are very happily executed.

"Jesuiticus has respectable talents; and he occupies an important station in the church. He is a man of professions, of gentle manners, and of a persuasive tongue; he can, in little things, make the worse appear the better reason; he knows what points in a subject to exaggerate, what to depress, and what to overlook; and no wonder that, with these qualifications, he is regarded by many as a prodigy of wisdom and goodness. Others, whose minds are not blinded by their friendship and their interests, have learned to view with distrust all his great enterprises, which have a bearing on the cause of religion. Had he true modesty, he might be very useful in a humble sphere. But he wishes to be the leader of a party—poor ambition! and like many others, who have the same desire after pre-eminence, he is loud and frequent in reiterating the watch-words of the party, to which he has attached himself. While he expatiates on the loveliness of charity, and the hatefulness of a bigoted, sectarian spirit, he tells those who are suspected of unsoundness in their creed, that they are persecuted; encourages jealousies among good men; and tries to keep up a perpetual skirmishing in the ranks of the faithful. And while he kindles a fire in men's blood, he seems to cry with Antony in the play,

'Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up
To such a sudden flood of mutiny.'

The prevalence of truth and peace would, he knows, be death to him and all his hopes of power. He must ride in the whirlwind, or go on foot. He makes use of all his popularity, all his arts of management, to exalt himself, at the expense of those who will not consent to wear his cockade, nor follow his triumphal chariot. One would think him an adept pupil of Machiavel, or a successful student of the "*Monita Secreta*" of the Society of Jesus. Yet Jesuiticus would deeply resent the charge of dishonesty; and he sometimes puts on such an appearance of openness and candour, as half imposes upon the persons who have witnessed most of his manoeuvres, and have the clearest insight into his character.

"I do not refer to him with the design of injuring an individual, (I wish there were but one Jesuiticus,) but from the hope that such an example of moral obliquity in one who is called a Christian, may, if distinctly set before you, so excite your abhorrence of the conduct to which I allude, as to guard you against any approaches towards it yourself, to the end of your days. While you remember the importance of prudent reserve in your words and actions, never descend to finesse; conceal what you should from principle; and make it not necessary to hide your designs, on account of the sinister and unworthy motives which give them birth."

The twenty-fifth chapter on Special Grace, is peculiarly able and interesting. The reasoning is clear, exact, and unanswerable. Among other remarkable discoveries of the times, it has been recently found out, that Christians have always been mistaken in supposing the doctrine of Special Grace to be taught in the Bible—that they have always drawn from Scripture a doctrine which dishonours God in the highest possible degree, and that infidels and Socinians have always been right in their objections against this truth. But we are now told that this great doctrine, and all the others of the evangelical system, as they have ever been understood by the Church, are built upon a system of moral agency which makes God a tyrant, and really destroys human accountability. It certainly becomes those who have made this discovery, and have succeeded so far in unsettling the minds of the community on the great subject of a man's accountability, to substitute some scheme of moral agency in its place;—not merely a scheme which may be handed about in private, but which may be made public, and be subjected to strict examination.

It must be acknowledged that our author has struck a bold stroke in departing from certain rules of composition which may now be considered as pretty well established by modern usage. His readers will look in vain for those amusing narrations, dialogues, and anecdotes which have given popularity to many of the works on practical religion which have of late appeared in this country. We would not attempt wholly to excuse him for so serious an instance of nonconformity to the modern fashion of writing, and yet we feel it our duty to say all in his defence which the case admits.

We have never supposed that the public, after they had once got a taste of this kind of writing, would ever be cloyed with it, or that they ever would be much interested in truth, recommended by the ordinary arts of eloquence, when they have had it so long disguised and even concealed in children's stories. Especially we should expect that any attempt to wean them *suddenly* from their favourite entertainment must be followed by manifest signs of impatience and disgust. But it ought also to be remembered that all have not the peculiar talents adapted to this kind of composition. We doubt whether even Swift, Addison, or Pope could have succeeded here, and must think that our author

has done wisely in not attempting a style in which nature has not furnished him with powers to excel. We assure the ladies that he would have been very happy to have told them all about little Ben and his cap, and a thousand bewitching little anecdotes from the nursery and the school; but he measured the task, and measured his powers, and did not think it prudent to make an essay where success was scarcely probable and defeat must have been disastrous.

These modern writers of religious books have adopted some maxims of thrift from the counting room. For our part we could never discover why it was not the duty of a prudent man to be economical with regard to thought, as well as other things which are confessedly of less value. In telling a story in the form of dialogue, the usefulness of the new rules of composition is most clearly seen. For instance, says one of these narrators: "Sophia, dear." "What, mamma?" "Come here." "Yes, mamma." Nothing fills up a book like your dialogue. Here, "Sophia, dear," fills one line, "What mamma," fills another, "Come here," another, and "Yes mamma," another. Thus thoughts and sentiments which, in the ordinary method of composition, are compressed into one line, are here expanded into four, a clear saving to the extent of some hundred per cent. But our author designed to make his work accessible to as many as possible, and by adhering to the old rules of rhetoric he has succeeded in bringing his thoughts on these important subjects into the compass of a single volume, whereas, had he followed the modern style, they must have been swelled to some dozen or fifteen.

It had always been known, that such topics as Eternity, Judgement, Hell, when presented alone, were apt to stir up unpleasant and gloomy feelings in certain minds; but it has been ascertained that in connexion with these charming little anecdotes they have no such influence at all; a person soon gets to contemplate them with absolute indifference. The success of the books I have mentioned in making religious subjects palatable to all classes of readers perhaps occasioned this style of composition being adopted by the pulpit: indeed it is in some danger of being monopolized by it. Some ministers whom we have heard of late, preach entirely in this manner. Give them a text from the Bible to start with, and they have always enough droll stories for the sermon. In short these gentlemen, who have

generally an infinite deal of wit, will contrive to draw matter of amusement and even merriment from the most solemn and awful topics. We question whether their audiences could find so much amusement any where else, except at the theatre, as at their discourses. And yet no men tell of so many conversions.

While we concede to this style of writing all these advantages, we will not conceal it from our readers, that some have objections to it of a moral nature, and perhaps our author may be of the number. Indeed most of the objections we have ever heard against it are urged on religious, and not rhetorical, grounds. These objectors have nothing to say against the *art of sinking* in general. They complain only of its abuse. They think it profanity to apply it to religious subjects. To sink a grand object, say they, may be amusing, but to degrade a religious one, is impiety. They complain that their feelings have been hurt and even shocked, to see the great truths of religion explained by comparisons and illustrations which would hardly be employed by the scoffer to burlesque them. Perhaps our author may have had similar feelings, and have been deterred from this species of style by scruples of conscience. If so, his neglect to employ it, so far from needing excuse, certainly merits great praise.

Our author has shown his prudence in not calling by name a certain system of philosophy which is beginning to prevail among us, and of which it was necessary for him to speak. He seems to have been fully aware of the very singular, but very common fact, that it is sure to be considered slanderous by errourists, to impute to them opinions and sentiments of which it is notorious, that they are the propagators and champions. We remember a young fellow, whose family name had become somewhat unpopular, taking great offence under similar circumstances. On overhearing one of his neighbours saying of him, that *he was a true Curtis, and always would be*, it was too much for him; —he could not help telling his neighbour, that he was *a foul-mouthed villain for calling names*.

The patrons of this philosophy have had singular success in explaining the great doctrines of Christianity. They have wholly removed most of the objections brought by infidels against them, and have retrenched the Christian system to such a degree that it is now conceded that heretofore it

has been always and altogether misunderstood. The doctrines of religion are found to have a meaning, not only different from that long received, but even opposite to it. Naturalists tell us of a tribe of ants, which mine their way into houses, and without giving any notice of their operations, or once appearing in sight, remove the substance of the building and fixtures, leaving only a thin outside shell or crust. The substance is carried off; the shape alone remains. So that one would think that they had been giving a demonstration of a part of the old philosophy, that form and matter are two distinct substances, and that they had succeeded in making the separation. How remarkable that instinct which enables them always to work so accurately within a hair's breadth of detection and exposure, and yet always to escape! The instinct of these little animals, however, has not perhaps carried them farther, than the skill of certain philosophers in explaining the doctrines of Christianity. They seem to have had the chemical skill to effect a complete separation between the language and meaning of these doctrines. The forms of expression are retained with the utmost scrupulousness and exactness. The meaning, by some singular process, has been made to disappear.

Socinians and infidels must be not a little mortified on finding, by the light of this philosophy, that they have never understood what they were opposing, and have always been beating the air—that the orthodox and themselves think exactly alike on certain subjects which have always been peculiarly galling to them. One thing is clear: Christianity henceforth must be comparatively free from their opposition. They will now have no excuse for renewing their unkind attacks upon its doctrines. And should they ever do so, it would be perfectly easy to fix on them the charge of wanton barbarity. What motive could they have? Indeed it would be highly impolitic. Some even go so far as to say, it would be absolute folly, like a band of robbers attacking an empty house.

Our author, throughout his work, seems to have formed a very low estimate of the present state of piety in the community. He does not seem by any means to make sufficient allowance for what has been accomplished by late religious excitements, and the introduction of the new philosophy, particularly the latter.

The practical influence of this philosophy is beginning to be felt very sensibly; but there is no doubt that it is des-

tinged yet to exert a far greater influence. Once it was considered pretty well for the Christian if he could serve God ; but since this new light has sprung up in the religious world, nothing is more common than to find numbers who manage to serve both God and mammon, and that too with very exemplary zeal and fidelity. Christians have found it a very easy and delightful task to cultivate *the constitutional desire of happiness*, and many, it must be confessed, have made attainments in this beyond our most sanguine expectations. The divines who have recently applied this principle to evangelical religion have been more fortunate in their language than the ancient philosopher who applied the same principle to morals. We regard the term "constitutional desire of happiness" as much more guarded than "love of pleasure," and much less liable to excite suspicion ; and yet it must be allowed that it means precisely the same thing. The Epicurean philosophy, in a certain state of ancient society, spread with astonishing rapidity among all classes : it became the general belief, both of the learned and unlearned. Whatever else may be said of this system, one thing must be acknowledged, no sect has been so exemplary in living up to its principles, no sect has given such evidence of the sincerity of their professions. It is very rare indeed, that a philosopher of this class has ever been caught tripping. All, both learned and unlearned, appear to have understood their principles, and to have made it their great business to live up to them. It is the opinion of a distinguished divine that this new theology will soon become the general belief, and should this principle work in religion as it has in morals, we may expect in the Christian world a degree of sincerity, consistency, and zeal, which has been witnessed in these latter ages.

It is pretty evident that all the arts and sciences are making a similar progress—the spirit of the age will permit none of them to remain stationary. We make the steam-engine consume its own smoke. Davenport has pressed a new power of nature into the service of man, and some of our theologians have contrived to make self-love, or the constitutional desire of happiness, (which has been considered a very inferior part of our nature, and which the old divines regarded as the principle of all sin) into very passable virtue. They give it as their opinion that no higher

virtue is possible.* And unless their philosophy be wrong in all its principles, (and who can believe this?) their opinion must be correct.

Besides, the establishment of the constitutional desire of happiness as the principle of all holiness and all sin, has introduced great simplicity into all theological subjects, both doctrinal and practical. Why should not the same power propel backwards as well as forwards, provided it receive a proper direction. Conversion is become, under this philosophy, a very simple thing. You hear little now of conviction or repentance. You rarely see a person wasting his time in weeping over his sins. He just stops long enough to change his "voluntary preference," and then goes on about his business. Thus by the simplest process imaginable—by barely shifting the direction of the power, we see the man instantly driven forward in holiness, as briskly as he had been before in sin.

This system is eminently calculated to remove that gloom and dejection which are apt to haunt those who live in neglect of God or open impiety, and which have sometimes driven them to very desperate courses. The sinner in the height of his rebellion may have the satisfaction to know that he is sinning at least from a good motive, that he is only calling into exercise and strengthening that *love of happiness* which is the principle of all piety, actually accumulating the capital with which he intends to set up in virtue. He may gather around him, and enjoy every object calculated to gratify and strengthen this innate thirst for pleasure, and yet indulge the soothing belief, that whenever it shall suit his convenience, he may with perfect ease, as an ingenious writer very happily expresses it, "vest constitution" in holiness, and become at once as remarkable for piety, as he had been before for sin and perhaps debauchery.

It has been long observed, that the young, who have never been shackled by system, make a much more rapid

* "Self-love is the primary cause of all moral action." "Of all specific voluntary action, the happiness of the agent is in some form the *ultimate end*." "The being constituted with a capacity for happiness, desires to be happy, and knowing that he is capable of deriving happiness from different objects, considers from which the greatest happiness may be derived, and as in this respect he judges or estimates their relative value, so he chooses one or the other as his *CHIEF GOOD*."

proficiency in this philosophy than others more advanced in years. They carry out the system to its theoretical and practical results with very singular felicity. Some of the choice plants which have felt the more direct rays of our new theological luminaries have attained a very remarkable, I had well nigh said, a monstrous size. A few of these young gentlemen, if our memory serves us right, had reached perfection some time ago, and it may fairly be presumed, that they have not been idle since. In short, under this new system some very young persons have at once arrived at attainments from which Edwards, Baxter, and Doddridge, viewed themselves at a very far remove even at the close of life. In truth we had always cherished the hope that these ingenious men, who have told us so circumstantially how sin gets into the world, would, before they got through their speculations, hit upon some method for driving it out. And it is our firm persuasion that were not certain theologians very much cramped in their operations by a certain squeamishness on the part of the public, could they have full swing, in their speculations, sin, in a short time, would be driven from a large extent of our territory in disgrace. Some of their early definitions of sin, in the opinion of many, gave it its death wound. It is conceded on all hands that they have lately succeeded in extracting* its root, and many conjecture that, even if they should now let it alone, and leave it to itself, the trunk and branches must wither and fall of themselves.

* "If Dr. Tyler believes in a propensity to sin, that is itself sinful, it makes God the responsible author of sin." "If Dr. Tyler should say, that the propensity to sin is innocent, still man as he comes into being is doomed to sin by a natural and fatal necessity." "With such a propensity, man has not a natural ability to avoid sin. This is alike true, whether the propensity be supposed to be sinful or innocent."

NOTICE.

A Compendium of Christian Antiquities, being a brief View of the Orders, Rites, Laws, and Customs of the ancient Church in the early ages.—By the Rev. C. S. Henry, A. M. Philadelphia, Joseph Wetnam. 1837.

This work supplies a want which has long been felt by theological students, and the Christian public. Within the size of a moderate volume, it gives the substance of the great and expensive work of Bingham on Ecclesiastical Antiquities. It makes no pretension to originality of investigation, but exhibits throughout the evidence of a judicious, and impartial, and in many instances independent use of the materials furnished by Bingham.—We welcome this volume as one of the means of directing attention to the earliest and best periods of Christianity, and hope to be able hereafter to give it a more extended examination.
